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Marxism Today

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

D. N. PRITT — THE MALADY OF BRITISH SOCIAL DEMOCRACY

W. ALEXANDER — PEACE AND MAN'S FUTURE

DIPAK NANDY — ANCIENT INDIAN MATERIALISM

EMILE BURNS — KENNEDY'S PLANS FOR UNITING WORLD CAPITALISM

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DISCUSSION:

DAVID CRAIG — ON STAGES OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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Marxism Today

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Editorial Comments

ROBERT BIRLEY, Head Master of Eton College, has been talking about public schools. Why do people send their sons to these schools?—because they think they are good schools, because they will be better educated there; and because they "will prepare boys for life in society . . . and help their sons in later life".

The first reason is questionable, the second reveals more than it intends to. *Will* the boys be better educated, better trained as normal human beings? Not if the twenty-seven well-known writers who contribute in *John Bull's Schooldays* are correct (the series appeared first in the *Spectator*). Of course some teach well, but most can claim very little in this respect.

No, the real reason is that boys will be "prepared for life in society", and helped "in later life". In what way? Because they firmly establish in the minds of those who are educated there the habit of thinking in terms of ruling class and ruled; because of the part they play in social segregation and discrimination, because of their relation to the Establishment.

Some progressive people want more working class children admitted; others think that leaving the class structure of society as it is, the public schools should be abolished; that social reconstruction can *begin* by democratising education. These are not the errors into which anyone who is aware of the fundamental structure of our society is likely to fall.

The Festering Slums of Peru

Television programmes of South America almost always give the impression of unexampled prosperity and affluence. Capitalism here appears to be in its heyday. We cannot be reminded or remind others too often of the misery and poverty behind the façade of the Latin-American Dance of the privileged. James Mann, who has written some excellent travel books, returns from Peru to remind us that in Lima "you can smell misery, and you need not sniff too hard". Behind the riches, the luxury, the gaiety, the splendour of the City of the Kings "squats a slum so festering, so filthy, so toad-like, so bestially congested, so utterly devoid of water, light, health, or comfort, so deep in garbage and excrement, so swarming with scabbed, ragged, barefoot children, so reeking with squalor that just to wander through its alleys" fills one with nausea and despair.

No need to argue that subtle propagandists are misleading an affluent society to look towards the romantic ideals of an impossible socialism. Peru is a fact that utters its own propaganda—and Cuba is another.

Latin America in Ferment

After Asia, Africa—and now Latin America—is in ferment. Following on the Cuban revolution United States control in many countries is being undermined by national movements against the governments put in by American imperialism. The most definite recent success has been in Ecuador, where even with the help of the armed forces the stooge dictator was forced out, and an attempt to substitute another American tool was defeated. The progressive vice-president, who had been imprisoned by the dictator, was released and became president, with a programme of an independent foreign policy and the use of the country's resources for its own needs. There is every indication that the movement is keeping up its pressure for the carrying out of a progressive policy.

In San Domingo, where dictator Trujillo had been succeeded by another American stooge, the national liberation movement developed its struggle for a democratic government to the point of a general strike at the end of November, in spite of the presence of an American fleet off-shore. There have been many attacks on the demonstrators by police and army, but these have not succeeded in suppressing the movement.

In Brazil the victory of the national candidate Quadros in the recent presidential election has been followed by the restoration of normal relations with the Soviet Union, against United States wishes, and important agrarian reforms are foreshadowed. The Chamber of Deputies has passed a law restricting foreign companies from exporting their profits.

All through Latin America, even where no political changes have taken place, the movement of support for Cuba is extremely powerful and is linked with the fight against United States imperialism for national independence.

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Cuba's United Party

In September last a new monthly journal was published in Cuba—*Cuba Socialista*—on the editorial council of which were Fidel Castro, Blas Roca and other revolutionary leaders. The journal was announced as a step towards the formation of a United Party of the Socialist Revolution of Cuba; among its aims was "to study from the standpoint of Marxist theory, the various aspects of the struggle for socialism".

In a televised speech on December 2nd, Castro developed the idea of the united party, to be drawn from the Popular Socialist Party of Cuba (Communist) and the July 26th Movement and the Revolutionary Directorate. This united party, he said, would be the leading force of the Revolution, and the government would be a "collective leadership based on the state leadership by a democratic revolutionary party". The party programme "will be a Marxist-Leninist one adapted to the objective conditions of our country". Castro declared himself a Marxist-Leninist, saying that "when life has given us more lessons and when we have had more knowledge of imperialism, we become more Marxist in sentiment".

United Nations and People's China

The record of Britain's votes in U.N. is a shameful one, but on no issue more shameful than in relation to People's China. Time after time Britain has supported the United States in its manoeuvres to prevent any discussion on the issue of admitting People's China and ending the bogus China representation of Chiang Kai-shek. Referring to the General Assembly debate on this issue which opened on December 1st, the *Guardian* U.N. correspondent wrote that the British delegates were hoping that a straightforward vote on admission could be avoided, and that "some formula will be found for warding off the evil day where Britain will have to oppose the U.S."

In fact, Britain hit on a facing-both-ways solution—voting for the U.S. proposal making the issue require a two-thirds majority; then voting for the admission of People's China, which was lost by 48 votes to 36, with 20 abstentions.

Choosing the Corner

The Fifteenth Session of the United Nations General Assembly adopted, on Soviet initiative, a Declaration for the independence of colonial countries and peoples which has remained a dead letter, except for the few countries where independence had already been arranged. At the Sixteenth Session last November, again on Soviet initiative, the question was raised of giving practical effect to the Declaration. The proposal was opposed by the colonial powers, whose representatives attacked the Soviet Union for trying to "drive the West into a corner". The representative of Saudi Arabia took this up, saying: "But why does the West always choose that particular corner? Why do the Western powers prefer to stay seated in the corner of imperialism?" Nearly fifty delegates took part in the discussion, which went on for three weeks, ending with the adoption of the resolution put forward by thirty-eight Afro-Asian countries, embodying the Soviet proposal for the setting up of a committee to watch over the implementation of the original Declaration, and to report to next year's session of the General Assembly. The resolution was adopted *nem. con.*, with Britain abstaining alongside France, Spain and South Africa!

Tory Housing Policies

Tory housing policies take knocks from an unexpected quarter. An article in the *Economic Review*, published by the National Institute of Economic and Social Research, whose Management Council includes such pundits of orthodoxy as Lord Robbins, Professor J. R. Hicks and S. P. Chambers, gives some startling facts about the relationship of family incomes to housing costs.

The author assumes that the maximum proportion of income a household can afford to pay for housing is one-quarter, in fact most households pay less, but he says: "Even taking this maximum figure of 25 per cent, two-thirds of households still cannot afford to pay the economic rent of a new house, and something like 90 per cent cannot afford to buy one out of income."

Government housing policies are of course directed towards making more and more people rely upon private enterprise for the satisfaction of their housing needs. The high cost of new housing, due in no small part to the inefficient organisation of the building industry, means that the housing standards of the overwhelming majority of people can only improve by "each household moving to a house a little better than the one it previously lived in. Housing standards in general would be improved by a process of percolation".

In other words the two-thirds of the population unable even to rent a new home have to depend upon the wealthier one-third being willing to move house so that they can step into their cast off housing.

But even this may not work out for it requires a high degree of mobility, and the article points out that this is hindered by the high expenses (legal and agent's commissions) involved in buying and selling houses over £3,000, the difficulty of

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getting mortgages on older houses and the reluctance of people living in rent-controlled houses to move. In other words housing policies based upon giving free enterprise the maximum scope defeat their own objective, with dire consequences for the millions of ill-used and overcharged tenants.

No wonder the author concludes that if "it is the tenants of the pre-1880 houses who are to be rehoused in the new houses, it is only the local authorities who can undertake this operation; for this housing would have to be subsidised substantially".

What the article really proves is that the slums will only be cleared, overcrowding ended and good accommodation provided for the continuously increasing numbers of separate families if housing is treated as a social service and not as an avenue for landlords, landowners, moneylenders and speculative builders to get rich quickly.

Marxism and Human Nature

Books critical of Marxism tumble from the press in a never-ending stream. What Marx really meant, where he went wrong, how subsequent generations of Marxists followed him down the wrong turning, how capitalist society has changed radically since he wrote about it—these themes appear in different guises.

Not that all Marx critics are agreed as to where Marx went wrong or in what respects Marxism as a world outlook is deficient or out of date.

We have Dr. Gordon Leff, Lecturer in History at Manchester University, declaring that "the problem of human nature, or more accurately of individual men, is one that Marxism almost entirely avoids. It does so by regarding men as essentially the products of the particular class into which they have been born and therefore as personifying its practices and precepts. . . . 'The essence of man is no abstraction inherent in each separate individual. In its reality it is the ensemble of social relations' (Sixth Thesis on Feuerbach)." As an explanation of the relations of the individual and his class Dr. Leff's interpretation of this passage is just silly. How simple things would be if people, particularly the workers, would always personify the practices and precepts of the class "into which they have been born".

Warming up, he goes on to declare: "Thus it is idle to regard men like Luther or Robespierre simply as personifications of the rising bourgeoisie and to imagine that one has thus explained the well springs of their actions, without having first examined them as individuals to determine whether they did not rather utilise the circumstances to assert themselves" (*The Tyranny of Concepts*, p. 127).

So what. When did Marxism deny the significance of the individual characteristics, idiosyncrasies and qualities of the individuals at the head of great historical movements. In his *Class Struggles in France* and in the *Eighteenth Brumaire* Marx drew a very clear line on the class and political struggles in France and pointed to the traditions of classes like the peasantry, to explain the rise of a mediocrity like Louis Bonaparte to be the Emperor of France; but he also dealt with the specific character of this personage. The same applies to Engels' estimation of Luther in the *Peasant War in Germany* and elsewhere.

It is the merit of Marxism not to take the leaders of great historic movements at their own estimation or the estimation of their contemporaries, but to explain the class basis of the policies they promoted, often unconsciously. This is vastly different from saying that their personal qualities did not matter.

Another View

But rolling off the press in the wake of Dr. Gordon Leff's book comes one entitled *Marx's Concept of Man* by Erick Fromm, the well-known American psychologist, at present a Professor in the Mexican National University, who outlines what he believes Marx's theory of human nature to be. (At times it almost seems as if Marx was one of the forerunners of Professor Fromm.) The bulk of this book consists of copious extracts from Marx's *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* of 1844, translated by Professor T. B. Bottomore of the London School of Economics. Professor Fromm is not unaware that another English translation of the manuscripts is in existence, for he says: "The first English version was published in Great Britain by Lawrence & Wishart Ltd., using a recently published translation by the Foreign Language Publishing House, Moscow. *The translation by T. B. Bottomore included in this volume is the first by any Western scholar*" [italics ours]. Not at all. A reference to the Moscow version of 1959 will show that the translation and most of the footnotes are by Martin Milligan, a Scotsman and a scholar.

Different uses have been made of those manuscripts (1) after 1956 the revisionists used them to show the humanist basis of the thought of the early Marx, who they alleged had taken a wrong turning later; (2) bourgeois critics used them to show that all the essentials of Marxism had already been outlined in 1844 and that Marx's later work consisted in selecting and assembling innumerable facts to confirm the theoretical system which he had already arrived at before he had assembled the facts; and (3) that the manu-

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scripts are a landmark in Marx's intellectual development written at a point when he was beginning to break away from the influence of Feuerbach. What is valid in the manuscripts was developed in the later works of Marx. What was immature was discarded.

This latter standpoint is that of Professor Fromm who shows that the valid concepts of the earlier work of Marx appear in the later and with much else besides. He is not consistent in this, however, holding that leading Marxists of the past would have behaved differently, had they known of the existence of the manuscripts.

"There is no greater misunderstanding or misrepresentation of Marx," says Dr. Fromm, "than is to be found implicitly or explicitly, in the thought of Soviet Communists, the reformist Socialists and the capitalist opponents of socialism alike, all of whom assume *that Marx wanted only the economic improvement of the working class, and that he wanted to abolish private property so that the worker would own what the capitalist now has.*

"The principal goal of socialism for Marx," he says, "is the recognition or realisation of man's true needs, which will only be possible when production serves man and capital ceases to create and exploit the false needs of man."

In suggesting that he has rediscovered an aspect of Marx's thought that Marxists in general and Soviet Communists in particular have forgotten, Dr. Fromm is talking sheer nonsense. Never has Marxism concerned itself *only* with the economic, and certainly the Soviet Communists have not, as the following quotations from the new Programme of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union show:

"*What is Communism?*"

> "Communism is a class social system with one form of public ownership of the means of production and full social equality of all members of society; *under it the all-round development of people will be accompanied by the growth of productive forces* through continuous progress of science and technology; all sources of social wealth will gush forth abundantly and the great principle 'From each according to his ability to each according to his needs' will be implemented. Communism is a highly organised society of free socially conscious working people in which public self-government will be established, a society in which labour for the good of society will become the prime vital requirement *and the ability of each person will be employed to the greatest benefit of the people*" [italics ours].

Only the economic improvement of the working class forsooth!

> "In the period of transition to communism there are great opportunities of educating a new man who will harmoniously combine spiritual wealth, moral purity and a perfect physique. . . . As less and less time is spent on material production, the individual is afforded ever greater opportunities to develop his abilities, gifts and talents in the fields of production, science, engineering and literature and the arts. People will increasingly devote their leisure to public pursuits, cultural intercourse, intellectual and physical development and artistic endeavour."

One of the insights of the manuscripts was how capitalism creates false needs, opposed to the real needs of the people. This aspect has been enormously developed by the efforts of the advertisement industry. Man is slave to the consumer goods gadgets, to obtain which many people have mortgaged themselves up to the hilt. Those gadgets are a source of worry and enslavement. (Plenty of overtime is sought for in order to pay the instalments.)

Khrushchov underlined this point when he said in his speech on the Programme "We favour a steady improvement in the living standards of the entire people, *but at the same time we are against any excessive accumulation of property which fosters a private-property psychology*". A point worth thinking on.

So we recommend that the programme of the C.P.S.U. be read before the manuscripts. One will get more out of the manuscripts in that way.

Last but not least the manuscripts show that Marx at that early stage was a revolutionary. He was never a wishy-washy Liberal who believed that genuine human progress was possible without the overthrow of capitalism.

Drain on Britain

It is now widely recognised that the £220-£240 million which the British government spends on overseas military expenditure is a terrifying drain on the British economy. According to an article in the *Statist* for December 8th it is time someone took a real look at it.

The terrific increase of this expenditure in the recent period, the article says, is due to the cost of supporting the British forces in Germany. Until German rearmament commenced the British army in Germany was supported to the extent of £50 million a year by the West German government. When the great debate on German rearmament was proceeding it was pointed out that as Germany rearmed this support would cease and Britain's balance of payments would suffer. Macmillan and Gaitskell, both of whom have acquired a bogus reputation for understanding economics, paid no heed.

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The last payment of £50 million was in 1957. Since then there have been three annual payments of £12 million and some arms orders placed in Britain. Next year all payments cease.

The cost of maintaining the British army in Germany has grown from £22 million in 1957 to £70 million in 1960 and will rise to £90 million in the near future. So Britain is going cap in hand to NATO and to Adenauer pleading for some relief, and it is not likely to get very much, if anything.

Why not Withdraw?

Even if Britain threatened to withdraw its forces the West Germans might not care sufficiently to pay up. The writer in the *Statist* suggests, nevertheless, that it might be better to withdraw the forces altogether on the grounds that "the strength of our influence in NATO is likely to depend far more on the viability of the British economy than on the number of NATO flag-cars with British brass hats in them".

One of the complaints of British and American "experts" is that the Germans are building up enormous monetary reserves and will neither use them to permit a rise in the standards of the German people (thereby increasing the demand for foreign goods) nor in overseas investments. This is a disturbing factor in the Western capitalist economy.

According to the *Statist* the ever-increasing German reserves are less due to successful overseas trading than they are to the American and British payments, for the maintenance of their troops in Germany. So the writer in the *Statist* says that "the time has surely come when we should offer to withdraw our troops from Germany, apart from a token garrison in Berlin, and undertake to keep them at NATO's disposal in the U.K., unless the German government accepts a permanent commitment to cover the whole foreign exchange cost of maintaining them beyond the Rhine". Whatever the advantages to Britain it would be a real "German Economic Miracle" if the Bonn government agreed to this and it would be a still greater "British Political Miracle" if Gaitskell demanded it and Macmillan agreed. But the sooner the British people demand such a withdrawal the better.

Marxism Today Forums

Under the auspices of *Marxism Today* the first two of a series of public discussions between Marxists and non-Marxists have been successfully held.

The subject of the first discussion was "Freedom"; the speakers were John Gollan, Editor of the journal, and Canon Edward Carpenter of Westminster Abbey, a well-known supporter of the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament. At this first meeting there was a full house of 215 people, and the audience was composed about equally of Marxists and non-Marxists.

The second discussion was on the subject of "Monopoly and the Ruling Class". The speakers were S. Aaronovitch, Marxist author of a recent book *The Ruling Class,* and J. Mortimer, a well-known trade union leader who edits the Draughtsmen's journal.

The Chairman of the meetings, Dr. John Lewis, a member of the editorial board of *Marxism Today,* made clear that the purpose of the discussions was not to make debating points at the expense of the other speaker, but rather to examine matters of the greatest importance to all concerned with the forward movement of our country.

This purpose at both meetings was pursued by the speakers, who stated their theoretical positions and examined their implications in existing society and in relation to the prospect of social change. In both meetings there was eager competition to participate in the discussion which followed the opening speakers.

These small gatherings to discuss big questions have considerable significance in Britain today, when in the midst of ideological confusion and crisis, an insistent campaign is being waged to isolate Marxism. There are many people among both professional and industrial workers who are deeply aware of the urgency of social change in the next five to ten years if disaster is not to overtake us.

Yet these people, isolated as they are in the main from Marxist thought and practice, when asked if they see the seeds of intention or organisation to carry through such changes, reply that they see no such purpose or organisation in British life. Because of this frustration and sense of urgency, a growing number of such people want to hear and judge for themselves what Marxists have to say, not what some clever commentator on the B.B.C. or TV has to say about Marxism. These discussions provide such an opportunity not only to hear leading Marxist spokesmen on controversial questions, but to hear them confronted by the viewpoint of Left people and Christians and pacifists and of all kinds of non-Marxists. Moreover, the discussions provide an opportunity for Marxists to exercise their thought and arguments against opposing ideologies, while at the same time seeking out the widest basis of agreement for common action.

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The Malady of British Social Democracy

D. N. Pritt

THE present political impotence of the Labour Party, and the unease—if not despair—of working-class and other progressive sections of the British public as to the short-term political future of Britain in the light of that impotence (I say "short-term", for the long-term future, in the second half of this dynamic century, of a people as industrially developed and as materially well-equipped as we are, is a socialist future) pose three main questions:

(1) What sort of a party, essentially, is the Labour Party in its present form and under its present leadership, and what are its aims?

(2) By what means does it seek to achieve those aims?

(3) What are the working-class and other progressive elements to do in the face of the situation disclosed by the answers to the first two questions?

To answer these questions, one must first examine the political background of the country and its people. I see this background thus:

Britain is one of the richest countries in the world. The contradictions and inequalities between the ruling-class and the working masses are in some respects more profound than those of almost any other country; and neither the Second World War nor the six years of Labour Party government that followed did anything to diminish these inequalities or reduce the power of the ruling class. Indeed, the position in this respect is actually worse than it was in 1939.

The Labour Party still commands sufficient support to make it for the present impossible to replace it by any other party as the main party opposed to the Tory party.

The Two-Party System

The country appears to be governed by a two-party parliamentary system, with an electoral machinery which almost guarantees the maintenance of the two-party system. But in reality it is ruled by a rich industrial-financial oligarchy, which is content, except in crisis, to exercise its power through the parliamentary machine, admirably fitted for its purposes. This power, and the working of the machinery, are protected and assisted by a vast and efficient "establishment", consisting of the press, radio and television, the established Church, the upper ranks of the civil service, and the monarchy, equipped with the laws and conventions of Parliament, including the scarcely-trammelled veto of the House of Lords and the cumbrous procedural machinery of the House of Commons. The House of Commons grows steadily weaker in its capacity to influence or control the government, for the purported expression of its opinions by votes is prescribed and in effect falsified by the orders of the party whips; its votes thus have no significance, independent of the government, more than once or twice in a generation. (The last significant vote was the one which led to the fall of the Chamberlain government, a little over twenty-one years ago).

The two-party system must be reckoned as part of the essential equipment of the establishment, indeed of the machinery of ruling-class power; it has been developed over long years as part of the apparatus for the maintenance of oligarchic power in the face of the universal franchise of an electorate containing a majority of workers with a long history of militant activity, including the creation of the trade unions, the Chartist movement, and the winning of one political and industrial concession after another—always, alas! falling short of any actual shift of power, even during the mighty half century which has seen the great revolution in 1917, two world wars, the establishment of the Chinese People's Republic, and the break-up of the colonial system. Even the six years immediately following the Second World War, when an awakened electorate put the Labour Party in full control of the parliamentary machine, at a time when even parliamentary methods could have achieved almost anything if the determination had been there, brought no difference.

The existence of two parties, with a rough balance of strength, accepting the fundamentals of "establishment" government, is essential to the working of the two-party system; those parties are at present the Tory and Labour parties. The Liberal party, whilst it commands a certain

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amount of support in the country, and collects a good many votes in by-elections, where electors have the opportunity to express their dissatisfaction with the two main parties without turning a government out, in truth represents no class interest and no trend in society.

The Communist Party, representing very clearly the interests of the working class and of all the boldly progressive trends in society, is still small, although it is growing; but it has so far made little direct impact on the parliamentary system, and is systematically denigrated by the establishment and every limb of it, above all by the propaganda organs—a good indication of their fear of and respect for that Party. The voting system, under which each constituency elects one member, and each elector has one vote, with no power of transfer or alternative choice amongst the candidates chosen by the party machines, operates effectively to make it extremely difficult for a Communist candidate, or for any other candidate not a member of the Tory or Labour flock (save a few Liberals), to win a majority in any constituency.

Parliamentary Socialism

That, I think, is the essential background, relatively briefly stated (for it is not very simple). On that background, how should the three questions which I have formulated above be answered?

The answers to the first two are largely supplied by Mr. Ralph Miliband, in *Parliamentary Socialism, a Study in the Politics of Labour* (George Allen and Unwin, 349 pp., 35s.). I see this book as an honest and pretty successful attempt to explain the limitations of parliamentarism. It really amounts to a history of the Labour Party, and indeed of the whole political scene as viewed from a Labour point of view, over the six decades of this century, although the author disclaims any intention of writing such a history.

What is the Labour Party, as we can see it today, with the help of this readable and well-documented book, and of our own knowledge and experience? In its essence, as Mr. Miliband puts it throughout the book, but especially clearly in the Introduction, the Labour Party is dogmatic in its adherence to the parliamentary system; it is not merely ready to use any opportunities that the parliamentary system may afford it, for a time, as a revolutionary party might well do, but it accepts the system without reservations, and deliberately rejects all political activity falling outside it, including even direct industrial action for political ends.

In the light of the background which I have sketched, this means that, in Miliband's view, the Labour Party leadership chooses to fight (which must mean that it claims that it can effectively fight) the most subtle, experienced, resourceful, and intelligent ruling class in the world,[1] on a terrain chosen by that ruling class and fortified by it with a Maginot-like establishment built over decades, and moreover can and will fight it on that terrain exclusively; and that it believes, too, that it can and will advance step by step against that formidable handicap to the socialism which it continues, if ever a little more faintly and with greater dilution, to profess as its ultimate aim, obeying all the time the "Queensberry rules" of the parliamentary system—rules which the enemy himself will unhesitatingly break the moment he cannot win unless he does break them. (They began, indeed, at the start of the century, Mr. Miliband tells us, with the rather odd view that this chosen field was not merely one on which it was possible to fight, but was even "ideally suited not only to the achievement of immediate gains by the working class, but also to the socialist reconstruction of society!") To fight on that terrain, accepting the parliamentary system, involves accepting the two-party system which is an integral part of it; and to accept the two-party system involves accepting its basic assumptions, including the support by both sides of the continuity of all the essential features of the existing establishment, including the alternating holding of office by the two sides. To fight on that terrain is hardly good strategy for a revolutionary party—but then the Labour Party is not one.

This stubborn loyalty to a system devised by their enemies for the maintenance of their own power, has survived intact through the long years, in the face of every variety of defeat, disillusion, and discouragement; it was unshaken by such parliamentary swindles as the Zinoviev letter election of 1924, and the creation and exploitation of the 1931 crisis, of which Mr. Miliband realistically and accurately writes:

> "Given the fact that Britain was in 1931 one of the richest countries in the world, and blessed with one of the richest ruling classes in the world, it is surely amazing that there were actually found rational men to argue that the saving of a few million pounds a year on the miserable pittance" (15s. 3d. for adult males) "allowed to unemployed men and women and

[1] Those who have had to deal with members of this class in Parliament, in the law courts, or even socially, may find it difficult to believe that any of them are really intelligent enough: but in fact enough of them are!

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> their children was the essential condition of British solvency; even less credible that two men" (MacDonald and Snowden) "exalted by the Labour movement and owing what they were to the faithful support of millions of working men and women, should have been the main actors in this obscene charade."

I quarrel with not a single word of that comment, except the word "blessed".

One may add that this loyalty to principle is so deeply ingrained that one can quite understand Mr. Miliband's view that what most people regard as the betrayal of the General Strike should not really be called a betrayal, since it was a position rendered inevitable by their adherence to those principles.

The Left

In their fight against the left, and their criticism of the Communist or non-Communist left, the Labour leaders praise the parliamentary system as "democracy" and "liberty", with the implication that no other method of government —or of struggle—can merit such description. (There really should be some prohibition of the use or mis-use of these words by anyone who has not passed an educational test.) To these leaders, democracy does not mean rule by the people, but is a cover-name for the rule over the people of a financial oligarchy through parliamentary machinery; and liberty means—as it does to every capitalist apologist—the freedom to exploit their fellow-men, which is enjoyed by everyone in the capitalist world who has enough resources to make him "free" to do so, a form of freedom surely to be repudiated by anyone who proclaims socialism as even his ultimate aim.

There is, of course, and always has been, a left opposition to the Labour Party leaders, both within and without the Labour Party. Mr. Miliband relates the history of this left pretty well, showing how, whilst it has always been strong enough to influence and even to alter the behaviour of the ruling right, and to score important paper victories at Conferences (victories whereby directions are given to the right leadership to take progressive measures which they do not want to take, and will not in fact take), it has never gained the upper hand or prevented the leadership from sticking to its "principles" regardless of the cost to the movement and the country. (The left in the Labour Party has indeed always been outmanoeuvred; I remember Lord Shepherd, when he was the national agent, saying to me: "Do you think there's anything we don't know about managing an annual conference?")

Mr. Miliband reminds us, too, of something which has great importance when we come to find the answer to Question 3, how the left forces inside the party have changed in organisational form from time to time—shifting from the I.L.P. to the Socialist League, Bevanism, and many other honourable if shallow-rooted bodies.

It is an illustration of the obstinate "loyalty to principle" of the right, and to some extent of the weakness of the left, that through all the years of struggle, including two world wars and a General Strike which made the foundations of the establishment totter, plus two minority Labour governments and one fully-empowered one, the Labour Party never destroyed any of the elements of ruling-class power or of the fetters which I have enumerated in the background description given above—not even, save for a minor amendment to the Parliament Act, the existence and power of the House of Lords, or the cumbrous procedure of the House of Commons.

Mr. Miliband shows, too, how in the atmosphere of the parliamentary struggle—which really amounts to parliamentary co-operation—a Labour Party which accepts and supports a war is gradually drawn into all the capitalist-chauvinist positions, dilemmas and fallacies which the ruling class parades as part of national patriotism (patriotism, if you please, from a ruling class which has never failed at any stage of history, even in the greatest peril of its people, to prefer its own class interests to those of the country as a whole!). The same results are seen to follow from the acceptance and support of *cold* war, which has led the Labour Party to the acceptance and support of American control, of NATO, of the resulting crippling arms expenditure, the threat of hot war, the destruction of social progress, the Polaris bases, the German troop bases, and other such invasions to come.

It comes as a relief, in contrast to the ghastly nature of other developments, when Mr. Miliband shows us the hideous mistrust of working-class capacity to run industry, the obsession with "respectability", the inferiority complexes and the resulting defensiveness, and the snobbish delight in dressing up and in mixing with the established "Great", displayed by leaders who ought to have been proudly grasping the opportunity to lead the finest working class in the capitalist world forward in a successful fight for a socialist world.

The weakness of Mr. Miliband's valuable analysis is that he seeks to show all these appalling policies as the consequence of parliamentarism, instead of as the consequence of the basic reformist outlook of acceptance of capitalism.

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In the light of what Mr. Miliband writes, and of our own knowledge, it is perhaps useful to turn back to the first two questions and to give summary answers to them, thus:

(1) The Labour Party is a reformist party which seeks to govern the country, as a capitalist country, better than the capitalists can do, and professes to want at the same time to advance gradually towards socialism.

(2) It seeks to make this advance solely through the parliamentary system.

What to do?

So we come to the third question, "What are we to do about it?" This is perhaps the most important question before us today, and we must make a constructive answer to it, which may lay the foundation of a constructive socialist policy.

Mr. Miliband does not set out to answer this question, and contributes to it no more than a well-founded assertion that the crisis (born of three successive General Election defeats and of the improbability either of a quick change of policy or of victory in the next Election), cannot be resolved without profound changes in the whole character of the Labour Party; but he provides pretty well the whole of the background against which the answer must be given; and he adds to his general description of the strength and weakness of the left forces, discussed above, the new feature, not always widely realised, that much of the progressive forces within the Labour Party are now to be found in the trade unions.

Now, how are we to bring about these profound changes, so greatly needed, so often appearing to be "just round the corner", so often the subject of frustrated hopes?

The first steps in framing our answer are easy; it is clear that the problem of the present situation in the Labour Party can only be solved by the left-wing forces inside and outside it, acting together so that the combined strength of the whole left can gain the victory over the right-wing leadership that has so far evaded the left within the Party, and thereby create the conditions for advance to a socialist Britain.

We can go on to say—plainly—that the only outside force which can give any serious help is the Communist Party, which in any such struggle will be playing exactly the role proper to it in any nation constituted as ours is. Mr. R. H. Tawney, as Mr. Miliband reminds us, put it very well in 1932, when he wrote that a majority Labour government, even one armed with wide discretionary powers, would need to be supported, on the example of Russia, by a body

> "at once dynamic and antiseptic, the energumens, the zealots, the Puritans, the religious orders, the Communist Party—call it what you please—which possesses not merely opinions but convictions, and acts as it believes. . . . Till something analogous to it develops in England, Labour will be plaintive, not formidable, and its business will not march."

We ought to my mind to be clear that the drive to bring changes into the Labour Party with the help of the Communist Party will not involve any repetition of the long, slow and ultimately unsuccessful battles of the left during the thirties. These were won by a powerful right wing which always seemed happier and better armed when fighting its own forces than when fighting the enemy, and which even then came so near to defeat that I remember Herbert Morrison hinting very plainly to a weekly meeting of the Parliamentary Labour Party that the "worst," i.e. some form of admission of the Communist Party, might have to be faced after all. Fears of slow defeat of that kind need not be entertained, for everything moves faster today; the left is stronger, the right weaker, than they were; the lessons of sixteen post-war years of lost opportunities and of vain attempts to present Labour to the floating voter as something that need not frighten him, the real hopelessness of continued right-wing policy, are being learnt; and, above all, the progressive forces inside and outside the Labour Party are stronger and the workers are more militant. Socialist forces will not much longer tolerate the moth-eaten dog who lies in the manger of the workers, and will neither eat the inspiring vitamins that give strength to build our future nor let anyone else eat them.

So, in the end, the way forward is clear, though there may be much brushwood to cut away before we march. The Communist Party, already growing in strength, must have its rightful share in the leadership of the working-class movement in some form of federal unity or collaboration with the Labour Party; the left-wing forces in the Labour Party must throw off both the obsessions of "the main idiocy of our epoch, anti-communism" and the deadweight of the right wing, and then the necessary "profound changes in the whole character of the Labour Party" will be brought about, and all those who want to support the Labour Party *and* to build socialism will find that they can do both.

I end with an expression of my gratitude to Mr. Miliband for helping me to understand more clearly why I always felt like a duck out of the water in the Labour Party, the Parliamentary Labour Party, the Parliamentary executive, and the National Executive Committee!

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Peace and Man's Future

W. Alexander

BERTRAND RUSSELL'S work as philosopher, scientist and writer has earned well-merited academic recognition—a Nobel Prize, Order of Merit and other awards. His recent action in facing a prison sentence rather than accept binding over and limitation of his peace activity has won respect and admiration from millions of ordinary people everywhere. Russell's courageous activity has helped many others to take their place in the peace movement.

The publication of a Penguin Special, *Has Man a Future?* by such an outstanding scholar and practical peace worker is a welcome event which can only benefit the whole movement for peace.

Debate and discussion in the peace movement has today reached a new high level as the situation has become more urgent and more complex. "Ban the Bomb", the cry that has come from a hundred thousand throats, is a deep, fundamental demand of the people. Wide unity, splendid action has been built around the slogan. But "Ban the Bomb" can only be a beginning: then the complex, more difficult questions arise—"How can we do it?" "Who can do it?" These are the questions which have been argued along the miles of the Aldermaston road, during the hours of the vigils, at every meeting and discussion. From this great discussion, involving so many people new to international and political affairs, there has been a steady growth of understanding.

The grave intensification of the war danger especially in Berlin, the fact that the Soviet Union has been compelled to carry out nuclear tests has brought a sharper, more urgent note into the debate in the peace movement.

Various ideas and moods have come into prominence in the ebb and flow of the peace struggle. When the Committee of 100 launched their activity there was considerable concern with methods of struggle—to sit, to march, to stand or to debate—to some extent at the expense of discussion on policies for action.

Today all those working for peace need a new sense of urgency, new clarity and understanding. Because of the tension and dangers, the situation changes rapidly and often unexpectedly. Only the freest, honest debate and discussion can secure the united, convinced and wide peace movement that the interests of mankind demand.

Russell's book is a sincere, useful contribution to this process of reaching clarity and unity.

The Danger of Nuclear War

His simple, concise explanation of the development of nuclear weapons and the danger of nuclear war will alert many to the urgency and convince them to join in peace activity. With the current attempts in the U.S.A. to minimise the effect of nuclear war and stress the possibility of individual protection ("fall-out shelter" publicity is now appearing in Britain), Russell describes grim reality. He recalls the U.S. Defence Secretary's estimate that 160 million Americans, 200 million Soviet people and everybody in Western Europe and Britain would perish in a nuclear war, and the Chief of U.S. Army Research who estimated the deaths at several hundred million "which could be either way depending on which way the wind blew".

Some attempts have been made to put the responsibility for the world's peril on the shoulders of those scientists who developed nuclear weapons, but Russell revealingly shows their concern and opposition. He retells how the great majority of scientists working on the A-bomb in America said, after the defeat of Hitler, that it should not be used against Japan—only to be overruled by the U.S. government. Oppenheimer who played a big part in the development of the A-bomb opposed the development of the H-bomb, only to be witch-hunted and persecuted by the U.S. authorities.

The book gives a valuable account of scientists from East and West getting together and, after friendly discussion, calling for united action to renounce war, so laying the basis for the "Pugwash movement", a significant forgathering of scientists from all countries to discuss how to win secure peace. The Pugwash movement was investigated and smeared by the U.S. Senate Internal Security Committee, in what Russell calls "an astonishing document", because Communists and non-Communists met together and reached agreement on peace.

Russell is convincing and definite on the need for co-existence saying it "must be accepted genuinely and not superficially as a necessary condition for human survival". He urges that negotiations must begin with determination to reach agreement "which do not alter the balance of power but do diminish the risk of war".

These points and others can only assist the clarity and understanding of those who study the

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book. It is because of the good points and the strength of the case from such a prominent, active peace fighter as Bertrand Russell, that it is necessary to comment and criticise certain weaknesses in the content and approach. This criticism is necessary in the interests of the peace movement whose clarification and unity Russell sets out to promote.

Class Divisions in Society

Because Russell does not understand, or prefers to ignore, the real character of society with its class divisions and struggles, he attempts to explain the world from an idealistic standpoint and solve its problems in moral terms. Russell does not understand that "men developing their material production and their material intercourse change along with this their real existence, also their thinking and the products of their thought". Though he nearly reaches that conclusion when he says "human nature is in the main the result of custom and tradition and education", he retreats again and again to the idealist position. Military expenditure and all forms of preparation for war "is an evil springing from human minds" (p. 109). But as a recent exposure in the New York *Nation* of the military-big business tie up in the U.S.A., with 21,000 million dollars going annually in war contracts, shows, the evil springs not from human minds but from the armament monopolies who grab inflated profits.

Speaking of the conflict between East and West, Russell says: "It is in our hearts that the evil lies and it is from our hearts that it must be plucked out." Contrast this with Bernal's Marxist explanation in *World Without War* (regrettably not included in Russell's list of recommended books): "Underlying the wars and preparations for war are deep divisions which split mankind. There are the differences between the states with different economic systems, capitalist and socialist; there is the long struggle between imperial powers and colonial peoples, and as well many old long-standing national disputes."

Russell cannot attempt to find the roots of the cold war—he only characterises it: "Both sides are blinded by mutual hatred. Behind this mutual enmity there lie certain human passions of which the chief are pride, suspicion, fear and love of power." In contrast, Bernal gets to the kernel of understanding the danger to world peace when he says: "In principle the cold war is very easy to understand. It reflects in terms of tensions between governments the hundred-year-old political struggle between socialism and capitalism, with the Soviet Union as the champion of socialism, and the U.S. as that of capitalism."

Because Russell does not fully understand human society and its development, he cannot correctly analyse the actual problems of the world today. Without this correct analysis, it is impossible to grapple fully with the problems of war and peace. Sincerity and devotion must rest on understanding.

Running through *Has Man a Future*? and many of Russell's recent speeches and broadcasts, is the theme that both major powers—the Soviet Union and the U.S.A.—are to blame. "Neither side remembers that the future of man is at stake." This plague-on-both-your-houses seems to be an easy attractive position. It could appeal to those apolitical trends found today among people newly awakened to the real world. But "blaming both sides" does not fit in with the facts of real life; because it is wrong it cannot help the cause of peace.

Who is to Blame?

Russell's book itself, if he were to face up to the facts he quotes, disproves his own contention. Every day brings current additional experiences and proof.

Dealing with disarmament, Russell maintains that each side advances proposals but makes sure, by including some special point, that the other side will reject them. But then he tells how in 1955 the Soviet Union accepted the Western proposals, till in confusion they were hurriedly withdrawn by the West. Today he could add the recent example when the Soviet Union has taken up the Kennedy-Macmillan proposal of September 3rd to ban atmospheric nuclear tests, relying on national means of detection, only to be met with hostile condemnation. How can Russell logically maintain his conclusion that "neither East nor West genuinely desires disarmament"?

There is no support for Russell's view in recent United Nations votes. On November 14th, a resolution urging that Africa become a nuclear-free zone was supported by the U.S.S.R., while the U.S.A. (and Great Britain) abstained from voting. The same day the U.S.S.R. voted to outlaw the use of nuclear weapons. The U.S.A. (and Great Britain) voted against. On November 30th, the U.S.S.R. voted for measures to stop the further spread of nuclear weapons. The U.S.A. (and Great Britain) voted against.

How do two governments deal with the outlook of their peoples so that, as Russell puts it, "they cease to hate and fear each other"? Russell describes how the scientists' appeal not to use the A-bomb was ignored, how Oppenheimer and the Pugwash scientists were victimised and witch-hunted, how Eatherley, the remorseful Hiroshima

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bomber, was put out of the way in a mental hospital. He has telling quotes from Lt.-Gen. Putt, U.S. Airforce Deputy Chief of Staff, who wants military stations on Mars and Venus to counter a Soviet moon landing; from Admiral Burke, U.S. Chief of Naval Operations, boasting of ability to destroy the Soviet Union.

Search the book in vain for similar accusations against Soviet leaders and military men. Everyone knows that Khrushchov and other leaders in speech after speech appeal for the peace supporters to make greater efforts, and advance detailed proposals for disarmament and peaceful co-existence.

Take another point: Russell says, "Nothing induces the richer nations to help the others except the hope of buying their support in the cold war." The South Korean people would certainly agree, on the basis of their experience, where of the total U.S. grants in 1960 of $400 million, nearly half, $184 million, was given in weapons and other military aid. But even a recent U.S. Information pamphlet, *The Threat of Soviet Economic Policy,* does not agree with Russell. It says, "When [Soviet] bloc built dams and steel mills are seen in many parts of the world, Soviet power becomes a fact which cannot be ignored. Another goal of the U.S.S.R. is to gain acceptance as the champion of peace."

United States aggressive bases strung around the world; U.S. economy largely geared to war production; U.S. support for militarist reactionary groups in West Germany, Spain, Greece, Formosa and so on; U.S. ruling class whipping-up of war hysteria and hatred. So one could go on, in every field, to show facts, hard and indisputable, that the U.S.A. is different from the U.S.S.R.

It is a factor in the world today that people in the capitalist countries, the colonial peoples, the "neutral" states—all the forces eager for peace—increasingly understand that the Soviet Union is for peace, while important, influential and at the moment dominant circles in the U.S.A. are for aggressive war.

This difference is not because of differences of national outlook or the moral qualities of the leaders, but because of the different social systems. The Soviet Union is a socialist state—the U.S.A. is imperialist.

The Idea of World Government

Russell's main proposal for securing peace is a world government, which must have a "legislative and an executive and irresistible military power". Though Russell is compelled to use one chapter answering what he considers to be objections, he never gets to grips with the realities of the world which make his proposal completely unreal. Today there are the imperialist powers struggling to keep and extend their positions, while the socialist states are building their new social system, but with recent memories of imperialist interventions. Then there are the underdeveloped countries, many of whom have recently fought to win their freedom and are justifiably suspicious of any outside interference. Russell's idea that all these states should voluntarily agree to pool their armed forces and submit to an international authority is completely remote from reality.

Yet the need for a world organisation embracing all states, where agreements can be reached for collective peace and security, was never more obvious and urgent. Russell is aware of some of the weaknesses of the U.N.—he wants the admission of all states who wish to join. But again his failure to grasp the divided world as it exists today is shown by his demand that the veto should go. Rothstein in the November *Marxism Today* has shown that the Unanimity Rule (the veto) is the corner-stone of major power co-operation to safeguard peace and security.

The Soviet proposal for a United Nations "troika" Secretariat is important because it takes into account all interests in the real world, and so makes agreement more possible. It is for practical proposals such as this for strengthening the United Nations and co-operation between states, not dream ideas of world government, that the peace movement must work.

Hope for the Future

Russell writes with feeling and warmth of a stable world without war, stating his hope for the future. "If our present troubles can be conquered, man can look forward to a future immeasurably longer than his past, inspired by a new breadth of vision, a continuing hope perpetually fed by a continuing achievement. No limit can be set to what he may achieve in the future" (p. 127). Socialists will have few quarrels with his brief picture of what life could be like in "a freer happier world". But Russell completely ignores the existence of class society with its divisions and struggles. Therefore his future can only be a dream life, apart from reality, to be wished for, not fought for, remote and unconnected with life around us.

When the World Communists met in Moscow in November 1960, they, too, painted a vivid picture of the happy future of mankind completely free from the fear of war. But this was life under socialism, when the working class had defeated the capitalist class and built the new socialist society. This stable society already exists

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in one third of the world, and is spreading rapidly. It has become reality, not a dream, because men and women have really understood human society and organised to defeat capitalism and end exploitation and the root cause of war.

Russell's book confirms wider experience that the most effective fighters for peace are those who have a correct understanding of class society and the roots of war. But Communists have always welcomed, and always will welcome and work with, everyone who genuinely wants peace no matter what their political outlook, and have always opposed any attempts to create bans and disunity in the peace movement. Peaceful co-existence is the urgent need of mankind.

There are two chapters on present-day disarmament and territorial problems, mainly dealing with Berlin and Germany. Russell's proposals to solve current international problems can be compared with those made by Khrushchov at the Twenty-Second Congress of the C.P.S.U. The common points outweigh the differences, important though these are. There is a considerable area of agreement: disarmament as an urgent aim; establishment of atom-free zones; no foreign troops in any territory; "Britain should come out of NATO" (Russell)—"All military alliances must be disbanded" (Khrushchov); peaceful co-existence with increased trade and cultural contacts between all countries.

This common approach to immediate problems, despite the differences of philosophy, politics and nationality, springs from a sincere desire for lasting, universal peace. It is an omen of the unity growing between all those who want to rid the world of the nightmare of war. When that unity has grown and been forged in purposeful action then we shall be able to answer Russell's question *Has Man a Future?* with a ringing "Yes!"

Ancient Indian Materialism

Dipak Nandy

THE Vice-President of India, Mr. Radhakrishnan, recently stated that "the characteristic of Indian thought is that it has paid greater attention to the inner world of man than to the outer world". Indeed, the course of Indian thought, as told in the standard accounts, might well be described as "Variations on an Idealistic Theme".

Was there then no tradition of materialist thought in ancient India? The question is not quite so remote and academic as it may appear at first sight. For it has been the claim of anti-Marxists, both in India and elsewhere, that Marxist materialism is fundamentally alien to Indian categories of thought and experience: it is a foreign ideology. To this two answers were possible. First, of course, that the argument that Marxism is alien to such and such a nation or people or continent has been produced with respect to every continent, nation and people since the rise of Marxism. It was alien to Russia for many of the intelligentsia before 1917; it was alien to China; it is alien to Britain and her traditions. It is, apparently, alien everywhere.

But, secondly, we have known for a long time that there has been in India a body of thought which stood significantly apart from the mainstream of Indian philosophic idealism. The Charvakas of ancient India appear to have arrived at a position as near materialism (we thought) as the dominating context of idealist thought would permit. The only difficulty in describing this body of thought as "materialism" (implying at least a moderately coherent and systematic account of the world) has been the simple and shattering problem of ignorance: *we don't know at first hand what these people actually thought.*

This is a curious but not wholly unfamiliar situation in the history of human thought, especially of radical thought. Our knowledge of the second-century Christian gnostics, for example, derives almost entirely from the "refutations" of their thought by the Church fathers. So with the Lokayata philosophy of ancient India. What survives of this school of thought amounts to scarcely more than grotesque parodies of their position by their opponents.

It has thus been left to Indian Marxists to piece together such evidence as we have, and to

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reconstruct the story of Indian materialist thought, its social roots, and the story of its survival in many forms to the present day. Not unnaturally orthodox historians of Indian philosophy have been content in the main to accept the distorted accounts as adequate, or even to argue that since no one could have held such patently absurd views *such views were not held*. Recently, however, there appeared a pioneering work in the field of Indian philosophy by D. P. Chattopadhyaya which makes it impossible to maintain that the Lokayata philosophy did not exist.[1] It is there, triumphantly alive in his pages.

Before we turn to him, it would be useful to summarise what was previously known to the generality of scholars. As he himself acknowledges, the bulk of the extant material relating to the Lokayata view is to be found in the pages of Professor S. N. Dasgupta's monumental *History of Indian Philosophy* (1922-55), a work of erudition and scholarship for which no praise is too high. But Dasgupta merely presented the evidence —he did not (perhaps could not) draw the necessary conclusions which that evidence suggested.

To begin with, the meaning of the word *Lokayata* is important, for in Indian philosophy etymology is an essential adjunct to philosophy proper. *Lokayata* is a compound word which can mean one of two things. *Loka* can be used in the sense of "this world", as opposed to the next, or in the sense of "the people"; *ayata* can mean either "based on" or "prevalent among". So *Lokayata* may be translated as a philosophy which is based on the material phenomenal universe, or, equally, a philosophy which is prevalent among the people.

This philosophy of the material world, which was also a popular philosophy, was reckoned to be on the one hand extremely ancient (Dasgupta wanted to put it down as an ideological import from the Sumerian civilisation) and at the same time quite recent—witness the running polemic conducted by idealist philosophers down to the fourteenth century A.D. There are, as we have said, no extant Lokayata texts, but that there was an authoritative text with at least two commentaries on it, is beyond question. The earlier of the two commentaries has been dated by some scholars to before 300 B.C.

[1] Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya, *Lokayata: A Study in Ancient Indian Materialism*. People's Publishing House, New Delhi, 1959. Rs. 27.50.

The Lokayata Philosophy

What did the Lokayata philosophy consist of? The most generally accepted view of the ancients is that expressed, for instance, by the Buddhists: Follow not the Lokayata which does not strive towards an accumulation of virtue. "The Lokayata leads to mischievous things and cannot lead to the path of Heaven or that of release[2] and is only a tricky disputation which does not increase true wisdom," wrote one Buddhist commentator. A Jaina writer said, "They are given to pleasures, amusements and sensual lust; they are greedy, fettered, passionate, covetous, the slaves of love and hate."

But there are more specific indications about Lokayata beliefs than these vague and sweeping indictments. Roughly, the Lokayatikas (i.e. those who held Lokayata views) may be credited with three distinctive positions: they have a theory of knowledge, they have a theory of being, and they have their own characteristic scheme of values.

To take these in order: the Lokayatikas, it is said, deny inference based on inductive generalisation, and hence also deny causality. This derives from their theory of knowledge. For them, all knowledge is derived from direct sense-perception. They do not, like Bishop Berkeley, assert that "to be is to be perceived," but they do say that not to be perceived is not to exist. This may be taken as a denial of occult or metaphysical entities whose existence cannot be verified by sense-perception. Their rejection of causality follows from this. Traditional philosophers have taken particular directly perceived facts, say, fire, and others, say, smoke. In between these direct perceptibles they have interposed a non-perceptible, a "cause". To assert as they do, that *fire is the cause of smoke* is to go beyond what is given in experience. Experience gives us the antecedent (fire) and the consequent (smoke), but it nowhere gives us a "cause". (In technical language, a "cause" would have to be a universal, and universals cannot be perceived.)

This is, of course, remarkably like Hume, and just as Hume was driven to admit after *his* denial of causality that in actual practice the ordinary business of life proceeds pretty smoothly on the assumption that causal relations do exist, so the Lokayatikas admitted the usefulness of inductive generalisations and the postulation of causes. The terms in which this admission is couched are important, in that they give us a clue as to the

[2] *moksa* = release, liberation from the bondage of the material world, held to be the ultimate goal of human life.

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real point of their argument against inference and causality. Purandara, a seventh-century materialist, "admits the usefulness of inference in determining the nature of all worldly things where perceptual experience is available; *but inference cannot be employed for establishing any dogma regarding the transcendental world, or life after death* . . . which cannot be available to ordinary perceptual experience" [emphasis added]. Their argument then is not sceptical but materialist: they object to inference as a logical technique only when it is used to demonstrate the existence of supra-sensible states or transcendental beings. This, they say, would be bad logic.

Consistent with this approach, the Lokayatikas reject verbal authority as a criterion of truth. That is to say, they reject the sacred texts as a court of appeal in matters relating to knowing about and living in the world. In any case, they argued, the sacred texts contradict one another at so many points that no consistent doctrine can possibly be erected on them.

Theory of Being

Then there is their theory of being. The Upanishads[3] assert that the world is constituted of five elements: earth, water, air, fire and space. The Lokayatikas reject "space" (on the ground that it is not present in perception) and accept only four elements, all of them physical. There are two aspects of their theory of being.

(1) In the natural world, they believe that these constituent elements and their motion sufficiently explain everything that happens, without reference to divine or transcendental explanations. "Fire is hot; water, cold; and the air is temperate to the touch. Who could have brought these distinctions into being if they were not of the very nature of these objects?" reads an aphorism attributed to them. They were, in short, naturalistic philosophers who wanted to explain phenomena by reference solely to the nature of the constituent elements of matter.

(2) Consonant with this rejection of the divine in the sphere of natural phenomena, they reject, in the human sphere, the existence of the soul. There is a reference in one of the Upanishads to certain heretics (identified by Jayanta, a later commentator, as the Lokayatikas) who believe that "consciousness arises from the elements of matter and vanishes with them and there is no consciousness after death". A Jaina text refers to heretics (again identified by a later commentator, Silanka, as the Lokayatikas) who are reported to have said:

> "So long as there is the body there is the soul, and there is no soul apart from this body, so the soul is identical with the body; when the body is dead there is no soul. When the body is burnt no soul is seen and all that is seen are but the white bones. . . . There is no separate soul which suffers pain and enjoys pleasures and migrates to the other world after the death of the body, for even if the body is cut into pieces no soul can be perceived . . ."

It is clear from these quotations that there is no place in Lokayata ontology for the supra-sensuous or the transcendental. The connection between this and their scheme of values is obvious; the last quotation goes on to say that, because of the essentially materialistic character of Lokayata thought, they are also moral nihilists:

> "The Lokayatikas thus think that there is no fault in killing living beings, since striking a living body with a weapon is like striking the ground. These Lokayatikas, therefore, cannot make any distinction between good and bad deeds as they do not know of any principle on which such a distinction can be made, and there is thus no morality according to them."

This is a common cry against materialists, obviously untrue as we shall see. Another witness said of them that "with them a pigeon today is better than a peacock tomorrow [and it is] better to have a sure penny today than an uncertain guinea tomorrow". On such grounds as these, others, including the famous idealist philosopher, Samkaracharya, tried to account for the popular appeal of Lokayata views: the stupid mob are easily attracted by this kind of "good digestion and no conscience" philosophy. Not all commentators, however, were disposed to take this view. Kautilya, the fourth century B.C. author of the *Artha shastra* ("manual of policy") reckoned Lokayata, along with Sankhya and Yoga [to be discussed later], as *logical sciences*, and there are numerous references in older texts which show that Lokayata views were embraced by a considerable number of influential and respected people who could scarcely be lumped together with the mindless rabble.

It is not easy to decide from this whether the Lokayatikas were academic, if heterodox, materialists, or sophistical demagogues preaching (and practising) a doctrine of wine, women and song. And Buddhaghoso, a fifth century A.D. follower of Buddha, did not resolve the problem when he

[3] *Upanishad* = literally, "secret knowledge" (as contrasted with *Veda* = "knowledge" with no strings). These are religious treatises of the Vedic school, of about 600-500 B.C.

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described Lokayata philosophy as a *vitanda-vada-sattham,* i.e. the science of *vitanda-vada.* Now *vitanda* means a sophistical argument playing on logical fallacies with no positive thesis to offer of its own; the sole intention is to confuse one's opponent. *Vada,* on the other hand, is the exact opposite: it is a discussion involving the presentation of a positive thesis which is debated in fair and scrupulously logical manner. Lokayata was, apparently, both these things at once!

Contradiction could hardly go further, and the picture one gets (even when tidied up, as here) is so confused that it is not surprising that some historians have despaired of finding any Lokayata school at all. "We are not convinced," wrote de la Vallée Poussin, "that a materialistic 'school', a 'system', in the exact sense of the word existed." What, then, does Mr. Chattapadhyaya make of it all?

Reinterpreting Ancient Texts

It is difficult to summarise a book of six-hundred-odd pages marked by a boldness of interpretation, solid learning, and breadth of outlook such as we have here. From an amusing account of the confusion in the ranks of scholars faced with the problem of Lokayata, he moves to a brilliant exercise in reinterpretation of some misunderstood ancient texts which are shown to be relevant to the problem of reconstructing Lokayata thought. A long excursion into the historical background sketches in the social matrix of tribal matriarchal communities in which the materialistic outlook flourished, which gave birth also to Tantrism.[4] The "proto-materialism" of Lokayata is then shown to develop into the philosophic materialism of Sankhya (one of the oldest of the "six systems" of Indian philosophy). The birth of idealist thought (for it is Mr. Chattopadhyaya's contention that the materialistic outlook antedates idealism) closes the account.

He begins by showing that the central text on which scholars have relied for their understanding of Lokayata, the *Sarva Darshana Samgraha* ("encyclopaedia of all the systems") of the fourteenth century A.D. writer Madhava, is thoroughly misleading. A time-gap of some 2,000 years separates him from the thinkers he is criticising. He himself was so diametrically opposed to the Lokayata outlook, that his attempt to state their position by explaining how *he would defend them* (this is his method of exposition) is at best hopelessly one-sided. And because later historians have started from the assumption that Madhava was the central witness on the Lokayata school and have taken the authenticity of his account for granted, it meant necessarily that they were more or less incapable of making coherent sense of the other evidence about Lokayata before them. The Lokayata school is thus reduced to a knot of fractious sceptics, without any positive views of their own, indulging on the one hand in sophistical destruction of the religious beliefs of people, and on the other in a crude and callous hedonism.

Chattopadhyaya will have none of this. The essential down-to-earth nature of Lokayata logic and epistemology is undeniable, but it is not modern empiricism in disguise. It would be unhistorical to regard their this-worldliness as though it were equivalent to a modern *secular* outlook. The Lokayata school denied the existence of the Brahmanic gods, the reality of the after-life, the efficacy of the Brahmanic ritual sacrifices. But they were able (and concerned) to do this because they had an alternative to offer in place of the Brahmanic tradition. They had an outlook of their own, *and this was bound up no less with a specific set of ritual practices and beliefs.* The clash between the Brahmanic and Lokayata traditions is not a conflict between the orthodox-religious and the secular-sceptical-empiricist.

> "The full picture that we have . . . is not that of certain isolated sophists indulging in useless disputations; *it is rather the picture of a clash of two cultures.* The exponents of one were preaching God, heaven and immortality and, as a means to attain these, the efficacy of the Vedic sacrifices. The other represented the standpoint of the people and was trying to defend their material interests" (36) [emphasis added].

What was this "culture," "deeply rooted in the masses of the people," which furnished the source of such a strong opposition to the Vedic religion? Many ancient Indian texts refer to certain opinions as the *asura* view.[5] These were known to

[4] *Tantrism* was a system of quasi-magical practices, related in later forms to alchemy, and involving physical culture and rites, by means of which various desirable ends (material wealth, immortality etc.) were to be achieved.

[5] *asura* = literally, demon. The *Bhagavad Gita,* the Bible of Hinduism, has this to say about *asuras* in Chapter 16, entitled Divine and Demonic Tendencies: "In this world there are two kinds of beings: those whose nature tends towards the Divine, and those who have demonic tendencies. *Asuras* . . . maintain that the scriptures are a lie, and that the universe is not based upon a moral law, but godless, conceived in lust and created by copulation, without any other cause. . . . They offer sacrifice to God in name only, for outward show, without following the sacred rituals." The *asuras* thus have a non-Vedic cosmology and practise non-Vedic rituals.

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be prevalent in India long before the Aryan invasion from the north took place. Two important views are found to be attributed to the *asuras*: that the self is identical with the body (as opposed to the non-material soul), and that the origin of the universe is the result of a process similar to that of sexual reproduction. The first point obviously connects the *asura* view to the Lokayata position; the second is related quite clearly to those ritual practices known as Tantrism, which were based on the belief (1) that the *deha*, i.e. the human body, is a microcosm of the universe, so that action in the one produces effects in the other, and (2) that creation or production of any kind is fundamentally sexual in type. So the creation of the universe, according to the Tantrikas, is sexual in character; moreover, they believed, the production of the means of subsistence, agriculture for instance, could be enhanced by a preceding sexual union. (For this reason they are accused down the centuries of practising sexual orgies, of being incurably promiscuous, morally depraved, and so on!) It is clear then that we have here a complex of beliefs and practices tied up with a primitive stage of social development, and that this complex is consistently associated with the *asuras*. Who are the *asuras*?

The Asuras

They are the natives of India whom the Aryan invaders of the second millennium B.C. encountered in their course. The *asuras*, it is said, have fortifications, they are dark-complexioned, flat-nosed and of "unintelligible speech". Indra, the leading God of the Indian pantheon, the Hindu Jupiter, is known as "the destroyer of fortresses" as well as "the scourge of the *asuras*". The recent excavations of Sir Mortimer Wheeler and others have uncovered in the remains of Mohenjo-daro and Harappa of the Indus civilisation traces of extensive fortifications, which enable us to date with some plausibility the final destruction of these cities and connect it with the Aryan invasion *c.* 1500 B.C.[6] The Indus civilisation, however, embraced in its orbit more than just these two highly developed "city-states," and it seems clear that *asuras* for these early writers were not only those who used fortresses. It referred to all those people "who were considered by the inheritors of the Vedic tradition to be their aliens [who] enjoyed a culture basically different from the Brahmanic one" (42).

That these people were organised in tribal communities is evident from the references of the early Vedic texts as well as the descriptions left by Greek travellers of later times; and it is in the organisation and subsequent history of these tribal communities that the roots of Lokayata beliefs and practices are to be found. These indigenous communities were matriarchal in organisation and subsisted principally on agriculture. At this early stage of social development, when manual and mental labour had not been separated from their unity in the processes of production, it was possible for an outlook to arise which is here characterised as "primitive proto-materialism", an instinctive attribution of primacy to material existence. (Readers of Professor George Thomson's work, whose inspiration the author acknowledges, will be familiar with the argument.) In the matriarchal organisation of these communities is to be found the explanation of the overwhelming importance attached to the female principle in both Tantrism and Sankhya, as well as the assertion of the equality of men and women which is found in Tantrism, so fundamentally at variance with the theory and practice of traditional Indian society.

In the clash between the Vedic Aryans and these tribal communities, the latter were broken up and what might be described as a wholesale social reconstruction was effected. By the time of the Buddha (who died *c.* 483 B.C.), this had become clear-cut policy. Kautilya, the Machiavelli of India, characteristically put it all down in cold blood in the *Artha shastra*. The tribal communities, whose military prowess and group-solidarity had been commented on by the Buddha and others, were broken up into small and self-contained agricultural villages. Mother-right was equally violently suppressed. Here was an artificial and externally induced change in the social structure.

> "for it was not a case of the natural disintegration of the tribal societies consequent upon the advancement of productive technique. . . . The whole process led to a peculiar social set-up which may be roughly characterised as *despotism above with incompletely destroyed tribal society in the villages below*. The cumulative effect . . . is that the Indian masses have retained in their lives strong elements that are traceable to the tribal society" (179).

One of the most illuminating sections of this book, incidentally, traces the origin of the caste system, that most confused of Indian historical problems, to this process of "incomplete de-tribalisation".

It will be clear from this why Lokayata, the

[6] A good account of this may be read in Stuart Piggott's *Prehistoric India* (Pelican, 1952), Chs. 6 and 7.

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philosophy of this world, was also the philosophy of the people. In its origins it was not, strictly speaking, a "philosophy" as we understand that word. Lokayata, writes Chattopadhyaya,

> 'was possibly a broad word used to refer to the popular 'cults', which, though opposed to the Brahmanical rituals, were nevertheless characterised by rituals of a this-worldly character. The followers of the Brahmanical culture called Lokayata the *asura*-view" (46).

But out of this background there emerged Tantrism and Sankhya, whose significance for the development of Indian thought cannot be overestimated.

We have seen that sexual immorality was frequently attributed to the Lokayatikas. The exact nature of these practices, so shocking to the Brahmanical writers (who, incidentally, overlooked traces of just such practices in the early Vedic texts themselves), reveals that the Lokayata tradition had a definite connection with Tantrism, both of which Chattopadhyaya shows as rooted in the practice of agricultural magic. The Vedic people, by contrast to the surrounding tribal societies, were predominantly pastoral and patriarchal. To the Vedic writers, therefore, the dominant position of women among the *asuras* was evidence of their degenerate character. So too those fertility ritual practices which are common to all primitive agricultural communities. It is here that the real nature of Tantrism is to be sought.

Tantrism

For Tantrism, like Lokayata, is both extremely ancient (traces of it are to be found in the Indus civilisation remains) and also contemporary: it has survived among lower-caste sects to the present day, in the process acquiring accretions of Hindu, Buddhist and other systems, with their concepts of "virtue", "liberation" and the like, which have no logical connection with the essentially materialist and physicalist outlook of Tantrism proper.

Tantra means "propagation" and as we have seen the fundamental characteristic of Tantrism, which remains constant in all its later developments, is its conception of nature and natural processes on the model of the human body (*dehavada*). The character of production is sexual, and this involves two interacting principles, the male and the female. In Tantrika alchemical literature these principles are identified with the familiar alchemical substances, mica and mercury. Indian alchemy, however, in contrast with European, conceived the female principle (*shakti*) to be dominant. Now Chattopadhyaya's account of Tantrika origins makes this difference of outlook intelligible.

The importance of Tantrism lies in its inbuilt orientation towards the material world and mastery over it, even though such mastery is sought by means of magic rather than a scientific understanding of natural laws. This orientation is so strong that even when later Tantra had grafted on to it idealist concepts like "liberation" and "immortality", these were invariably understood in a physicalist sense: immortality is to be sought in the culture of the body (hence *yoga*). However, the distinction between magic and science at *this* stage of human development is much too sharp. As Joseph Needham has argued in connection with Taoism in China (which, as he has shown, has many connections with Indian Tantrism), "science and magic are in their earliest stages indistinguishable. . . . Magic and science were originally united in a single undifferentiated complex of manual operations." This practical and manipulative relation with nature accounts for the materialist approach of Tantrism, its concern with physical and physiological processes. It also explains why Tantrism was the bearer of scientific thought in India, for if the Lokayatikas can claim to be the first logicians of India, the Tantrikas must be reckoned among the first scientists. They discovered, for instance, that the brain and not the heart is the seat of consciousness, advancing from Aristotle to Galen. But the most remarkable feature of the Tantrikas is their *outlook*. India is known to be *par excellence* the land of tradition and custom, where philosophy typically takes the form of commentaries on texts transmitted down the generations. How astonishing it is then to come across in Tantrika literature statements like the following:

> "I have performed the aforementioned experiments with my own hands and have seen them with my own eyes. They are not recorded from mere hearsay or from the dictation of a teacher. These are being promulgated for the benefit of mankind."
>
> "I shall give publicity only to such processes as I have been able to verify by my own experiments."
>
> "Those mercurial operations alone have found a place in my book, which I have been able to put to tests. Those who teach without being able to perform experiments labour in vain."

With their emphasis on experiment and verification, their rejection of authority and their refusal to take opinions on trust, not to mention the concern "for the benefit of mankind", these re-

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marks might have come out of the era of the birth of modern science in seventeenth-century Europe.

Matter or Consciousness

Perhaps the most exciting chapter of Chattopadhyaya's story is his demonstration that the Lokayata and Tantrika tradition found its theoretical formulation in what is regarded as one of the most important schools of Indian philosophy, Sankhya. The resemblance between Sankhya and the heretical Lokayata school was in fact noticed by earlier writers. Original Sankhya was definitely atheistic, and Silanka, for instance, acutely observed that the Sankhya doctrine was virtually indistinguishable from Lokayata in its rejection of the soul.

The Sankhya system (certainly pre-Buddhistic in origin) was known as *pradhana karana vada*, i.e. a doctrine of the first cause or ultimate reality, as opposed to the Vedanta[7] philosophy, which was called *brahma karana vada*, i.e. the doctrine of the Brahman, the principle of consciousness, as the ultimate reality and first cause. The opposition was between those who held, with the Vedantists, that consciousness is the ultimate ground of whatever exists (*chetana karana vada*), and those who held, like the Sankhya and Lokayata schools, that matter, unconsciousness, is the ultimate reality (*a-chetana karana vada*). The *pradhana* of Sankhya is *prakriti*, which may be roughly translated as non-sentient and non-evolved matter. Here, then, we have the conflict between idealism and materialism on the philosophical level.

The distinctive features of Sankhya philosophy are: a theory of matter, a theory of causality, a theory of evolution and a theory of mind. All these are, of course, linked together in original Sankhya (which, too, like Lokayata, has to be largely reconstructed) into a consistent materialist philosophy.

We may start from the Sankhya view of causality. This was known as the doctrine of *sat karya vada*, which I propose to translate as the theory of "the latent effect". (It has often been rendered as the theory of "the pre-existent effect" which is certainly not what the Sankhya philosophers meant.) In any causal sequence, Sankhya held, the effect is already latent in the cause. The classic analogy of the acorn and the oak is apt here: the oak (effect) is latent in the acorn (cause). It represents a development of the acorn and to that extent is different from it. But it is latent in the acorn in the sense that the development of the acorn *by the laws of its nature alone*, without reference to external agency, produces the oak.

The point of this theory of causality is that it is (or at any rate attempts to be) a materialist theory. To say that the effect is different from the cause *tout court* is to say that something is created out of nothing. "What exists not, can by no operation of cause be brought into effect." The Sankhya theorists, rejecting the entire notion of the creation of being out of nothing, argued back from effect to cause on the principle that like produces like. That is to say, starting from the indubitable reality of the material world and the causal relations to be perceived in it, they worked back to the first cause or primary state of the universe. Their theory of causality ensured that this primary state was not dissolved into an act of creation out of nothingness.

Evolution of Matter

Sankhya held that the ultimate reality of the universe was *prakriti*, undifferentiated and non-sentient matter, out of which the differentiated world as we know it has evolved. (*Prakriti*, it may be noted, is feminine in character.) Sankhya cosmology considered this primeval unitary state of being as constituted of the harmonious equilibrium of three elements (*gunas*): the *sattva*, the *rajas*, and the *tamas*. *Tamas* is the principle which lies behind the solidity of objects; it is mass, or the inertia of Newtonian mechanics, the resistance offered by bodies to an impressed force. *Rajas* is the principle that lies behind action, and may properly be translated as energy. Finally, *sattva* is the principle exemplified, for instance, by the flame: it is light, pure and it illuminates. (It is possible that the concept of *sattva* is an attempt of these materialist thinkers to find an adequate, i.e. non-reductive, description of consciousness as a phenomenon.) The state of equilibrium of these three elements is described as the *avyakta* or "unexpressed" phase. From this stage, however, primeval matter passes into the *vyakta*, the "expressed" phase, it begins to differentiate itself as the initial state of equilibrium breaks down.

What starts the process? Sankhya is silent on the point, and later adherents, anxious to bring the system in line with the Vedanta school, ascribed the initiating role in evolution to the *purusa*, the male principle, conceived as the principle of awareness or sentience. Now this element

[7] *Vedanta* = literally, the end of the *Veda*. The name given to the later systematisation of Vedic thought, so that it was seen as the culmination of the philosophy of the *Vedas*.

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(while it did exist in original Sankhya) when credited with an active role in the evolutionary process raises, as we should expect, acute contradictions in a consistently materialist scheme, contradictions which were brilliantly exploited by the eighth-century philosopher Samkara. There is no reason, however, why Sankhya, which was so squarely based on the concept of the self-development of matter, needed to call in an external agency such as awareness to start off the evolutionary process. Chattopadhyaya is almost certainly right in saying that this is a later development (distortion would probably be the correct term).

Evolution in Sankhya is periodic or cyclical. There is a first ascending stage in which the process consists (to quote Seal) "in the development of the differentiated within the undifferentiated, of the determinate within the indeterminate, of the coherent within the incoherent". This development proceeds on the basis of the uneven distribution of the three elements, which means that even determinate objects are in a constant state of flux. There is then the descending stage, in which the process turns into its opposite, as it were, and differentiation and development give place to dissolution, until the whole system returns to its original latent state of indeterminate *prakriti*. This is not, however, the dead universe of Jeans' and Eddington's fancy, for nature, even in dissolution, retains the inherent principle of movement, its spontaneous activity. One cycle succeeds another.

Two points are to be noted in the Sankhya account of nature and evolution. Change, in Sankhya, is conceived as real change. The doctrine of the latent effect does not mean that cause and effect, pre-evolved (*avyakta*) and evolved (*vyakta*) phases, are at bottom the same. The evolutionary theory of Sankhya is called *parinama vada*, roughly, the doctrine that change consists in a real *transformation*, the acquisition of a new *form*. The point will be clearer if we contrast this view with the view of the Nyaya-Vaisesika school, for instance, which saw change as *change of place only*, mere mechanical motion. Where Sankhya conceives matter to be spontaneously active, self-moving, Nyaya-Vaisesika attributed change and motion to an agency external to the body moved. Sankhya was an evolutionary doctrine where Nyaya-Vaisesika was a mechanistic one, if these terms are not anachronistic in the context of ancient Indian philosophy.

Theory of Mind

The uneven distribution of the three elements mentioned above needs to be looked at because it furnishes us with the Sankhya theory of mind. In the material world we may distinguish between bodies at rest, bodies in motion, and (let us say) human activity. Bodies at rest will exhibit a predominance of the inertial principle, energy will be latent and *sattva* will be sub-latent. Bodies in motion will exhibit a predominance of energy, inertia being latent and *sattva* sub-latent. In human movements, energy and *sattva* (the principle of consciousness) predominate, inertia being latent. Finally, in states of consciousness as such (e.g. thinking) *sattva* predominates, while energy and inertia remain latent and sub-latent.

How does this involve a theory of mind? What the Sankhya view implies, according to Chattopadhyaya, is that

> "even in states of consciousness, the characteristics of crude matter must be latently present. It is tempting to comment here that if we agree to integrate later scientific knowledge with this standpoint, we have to restate it as the view that thought or consciousness is not without a latent cerebral process. It will be the fundamental premise of a materialistic theory of knowledge. Though the early Sankhya philosophers were yet to be acquainted with the connection of consciousness with the cerebral process, there is no doubt that they were trying to understand intelligence, self-consciousness, mind and the sense-organs as essentially products of matter" (455-6).

This, in rough outline, is the Sankhya philosophy as it originally stood. It did not remain in this consistent form, and by the time that the first extant Sankhya texts are being written (about the fifth century A.D.), idealist accretions have already gathered round its central tenets, grossly impairing its internal consistency as a system. The "Achilles' heel" of Sankhya, as Chattopadhyaya aptly comments, proved to be the concept of the *purusa*, the male, representing that which is *passive and conscious*, as distinct from *prakriti*, female, active and insentient. In original Sankhya the *purusa*-consciousness had no role to play at all, as it logically could not, being *udasina*, i.e. indifferent, the uninvolved spectator watching the spontaneous unfolding of the cosmic process. When later writers, attempting to bring Sankhya in line with the Vedanta doctrine of the primacy of consciousness, tried to foist the primary role on to the *purusa*, the system became self-contradictory: a purely passive entity was endowed with the supremely active role of initiating and guiding the process of evolution. One may reflect here

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that in the process of formulating the instinctive materialism of Lokayata in conceptual terms in Sankhya, the way was opened for the emergence of idealism within materialist thought. Such a conclusion, implying that the very act of philosophising is, as it were, tainted at the source, would however be too sweeping. A more historical view might suggest that a fully consistent materialist philosophy (which is not less philosophical for being materialist) would have to await the development of men's understanding of nature and of themselves beyond the point at which Sankhya arose.

* * *

It is not possible here to trace in detail the fascinating story of the emergence of idealism in Indian philosophy, the orthodox Vedic tradition, which itself arose on the ruins of a primitive proto-materialism, nor the final collapse of materialist philosophy into a fatalistic determinism while the Buddha's teaching of withdrawal and release from the world swept through the country. It is there to be read in Chattopadhyaya's book.

It is not out of place to say here, though, that the distinguishing feature of this book is the systematic and convincing way in which the history of philosophy is reconstructed and linked to social structure and social change. Anyone concerned, for instance, with the anomalous position of the *purusa*, the male principle, in Sankhya thought, will find his comments on the role of the male in matriarchal society both provoking and suggestive. The analysis of the rise of Buddhism against the background of the stupendous social transformation of the India of the time is simply brilliant.

Marxism, wrote Engels, "is above all a guide to study, not a lever for construction. All history must be studied afresh. . . ." If the Marxist method needed any vindication, this book amply provides it, for out of a chaotic mass of material, each part meaningless in isolation, it has produced a systematic, coherent and fruitful synthesis. Fruitful, because it raises a host of questions, of fact and interpretation, which must be pursued in detail. It is to be hoped that Indian Marxists will follow up Chattapadhyaya's path-breaking work with the hard thinking and research that it calls for. In any case, the problems he has raised will not, one suspects, be answered until scholars have at least come to grips with the Marxist method.

What, finally, is the importance of the Lokayata tradition for Marxists today? The concluding word, the moral of the book so to speak, may be left to the author himself. Lokayata, he writes,

> "was crude, naive and primitive, and has little to compare with the self-conscious materialistic philosophy of original Sankhya, not to speak of the scientific materialism of today. Nevertheless, the recognition of this proto-materialism has its importance for the modern materialist and this importance can be compared to that of the recognition of primitive communism by the scientific socialist. He lays stress on it not because he dreams of returning to it; his purpose is rather to show that human relations based on private ownership and class-exploitation are not without a beginning and end. . . . Thus also is spiritualism and idealism, so often claimed as inherent in Indian thought: we will do without these in the future as we did in the past."

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Kennedy's Plans for Uniting World Capitalism

Emile Burns

IN a speech to the National Association of Manufacturers in New York on December 6th last, President Kennedy declared that "capitalism is on trial" and that "economic isolation and political leadership are wholly incompatible". These passages were the keynote of a policy statement which in effect called on the Western capitalist countries to unite to meet the challenge of the great socialist advances foreshadowed in the Programme of the C.P.S.U.

The claim that, as Kennedy put it, the combined output and purchasing power of the United States and Western Europe is at present more than double that of the "Sino-Soviet block", is no guarantee of what the relative position will be in the future.

In its efforts to maintain its present economic lead over the socialist countries, the capitalist world is faced with problems which are growing increasingly difficult for it to solve. The "plans" put forward by the United States at the recent Paris conference of the "Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development" envisaged an overall growth of the capitalist economies of 4.3 per cent annually up to 1970. This in itself was a modest target, about 50 per cent growth in the capitalist world in ten years, compared with the C.P.S.U. Programme growth of 150 per cent in that period. But even that modest target was clearly beyond the reach of some of the capitalist countries, especially Britain and the United States; though it was hoped that the higher rate of growth in Germany and France would pull up the average.

Now, with the long-heralded economic recovery in the United States still uncertain, and with West German production checked, Kennedy is putting forward the proposal that the United States should modify its traditional policy of protective tariffs, in order to make possible an agreement with the Common Market to reduce its external tariffs "to allow American products to enter on a truly competitive basis". "Led by the two great Common Markets of the Atlantic, trade barriers in all the industrial nations must be brought down."

Kennedy said that unless the United States was prepared to cut its tariffs as a bargaining weapon to get Common Market tariffs against United States goods reduced; and unless United States exports to the Common Market were increased, "our own expansion will be stifled" and "our international payments position and our commitments for the defence of freedom will be endangered". Moreover, if United States sales in the Common Market could not be increased, American businessmen "would step up their investment in American-owned plants behind those tariff walls . . . thereby taking capital as well as jobs away from our own shores, and worsening still further our balance of payments".

In fact, this process is already well advanced. The American Labor Research Association notes that from January 1958 (when the Common Market came into operation) to June 1961, 717 new American enterprises were started in the Common Market countries, in order to get behind the tariff walls. It adds that if Britain and the others of the Seven join the Common Market, this trend will be accelerated, causing further unemployment in the United States, since much of what the United States now exports will be manufactured inside the Common Market by American capital. It adds also—a point not made by Kennedy—that the United States enterprises in Europe will seek, on the basis of lower wages in Europe, to take over additional markets in Africa, Asia and Latin America, often at the expense of the plants in the United States owned by the same firms; thus the unemployment in the United States is likely to increase.

Competition

But to what extent is the project of the mutual reduction of tariffs between the United States and the Common Market likely to ease the problem for the United States economy? Or, to generalise the question, to what extent would the bringing down of trade barriers in all the capitalist countries, as proposed by Kennedy, help to overcome the difficulties facing capitalism?

Tariffs, quotas and all other forms of trade restriction—apart from what is nowadays the un-

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important aspect of raising revenue—represent barriers set up by each capitalist country against competition from foreign industries. Their removal on a mutual basis does not end the competition, but intensifies it by equalising the position of the competitors. This is what Macmillan referred to as "the brisk shower of competition" which would fall on Britain if it entered the Common Market.

But competition does not enlarge the market as a whole. If it benefits the largest and most up-to-date producers in one country, it does so at the expense of its rivals and especially of the smaller competitors. There is no magic in a "big market" for which a number of powerful monopolies are competing: the competition will not in total (though it may for particular monopolies) solve the problem of over-capacity in relation to the market which is facing particularly the United States, and to a lesser degree other capitalist countries. On the contrary, the fiercer competition will lead to the deepening of the contradiction between increasing capacity to produce and the total purchasing power of the people, as we are now beginning to see within the present area of the Common Market.

Common Market Experiences

When the Common Market began to operate in 1958, the upward phase of the cycle was still in progress in West Germany and France, and the monopolies in the different countries were still expanding capacity. No doubt the formation of the Common Market encouraged expectations of a wider market for each separate monopoly, with the result that the expansion continued, and industrial output in West Germany, France and Italy went on rising at a rapid rate.

But such magic as there was at first in the Common Market soon began to have a diminishing effect, and by early 1961 the rate of advance of all the Six countries slowed down. In the course of 1961 West German output actually fell—by about 5 per cent between the first quarter and the third. The *National Institute Economic Review* (November) reports that West German excess capacity in the investment goods industries was increasing up to July, and that even the consumer goods industries were working at about 5 per cent below capacity. New orders, both for home and export, were falling. In Holland, the fall in production had reached 7 per cent.

The change in the economic position of West Germany is of special significance because of the so-called "miracle" of previous years, when West German industrial output was rising 8 or 10 per cent each year. The point is that the reduction of tariffs and widening of the Market throughout the six Common Market countries has not fulfilled the expectations even of the modernised West German industries: the *National Institute Economic Review* concludes that "the halt to continental European growth seems to be due to slackening demand rather than to difficulties of supply"—which is a polite way of saying that productive capacity has outstripped purchasing power. The Common Market cannot contract out of the basic contradiction of capitalism.

Therefore, Kennedy's "solution" for the economic difficulties of the United States—mutual cuts in tariffs to make a great Common Market of West Europe and America—cannot solve these difficulties, even if it would give particular American monopolies a chance of in-fighting with West European monopolies. And the same goes for Macmillan's "solution" for Britain's economic difficulties. In any case, the idea that "combining and co-ordinating" the capitalist economies will somehow enable them to avoid being overtaken by the socialist economies is an illusion.

Nevertheless, faced with the challence of the new Twenty-Year Programme for Communism, there is increasing talk in monopoly capitalist circles of closer economic and political integration, towards some form of imperialist unity in which the leading monopoly groups of the different countries come to terms for the joint exploitation of such of the world as remains to capitalism, while they continue to build up their military strength with the aim of destroying socialism.

Super-imperialism

While Kennedy's immediate proposal was only for a mutual reduction of tariffs that would open the Common Market and the United States market to each other's exports, this was evidently intended only as a first step. He foresaw a wider capitalist unity in a kind of super-imperialism as the solution.

> "If the nations of the West can weld together on these problems a common programme of action as extraordinary in economic history as NATO was unprecedented in military history, the long-range communist aim of dividing and encircling us all is doomed to failure."

His proposal to "combine and co-ordinate" the economies of the capitalist world, however, comes up against a series of contradictions which are no easier for it to solve than the problem of keeping its industrial lead over the socialist countries.

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The most obvious of these is the inevitable rivalry between the competing imperialist groups. No one can be under the illusion that joint membership of the Common Market, for example, would end the rivalry between the British and West German monopolists, or between the United States imperialist groups and those of West Germany and Britain. They may be able to reach agreements to divide markets between them, or even to form joint super-monopolies in particular industries; but all such agreements can only be temporary. One or other of the groups will expand faster than its rivals, and break up any agreement that holds it back.

This rivalry extends not only within any particular area such as an extended Common Market, but particularly also in colonial or underdeveloped areas exploited by separate imperialist groups. In fact, the American plan seems to aim at dividing the capitalist world between the United States and a block of West European capitalist states formed into a single "great power".

The *Daily Telegraph* of December 8th, 1961, following on Kennedy's speech referred to above, also reported a speech by Mr. Bundy, described as one of Kennedy's special assistants and chief advisers. Bundy said that America's purpose was "the political unity of Western Europe", because the levels of power of the separate West European states "simply do not compare with those of the United States and the Soviet Union". Therefore, "it would be better if Europe were one great power" alongside the United States, each of these great powers "having its own close associations" —the United States with Canada and Latin America, and Europe with the Commonwealth and "less unified European neighbours".

This grand plan for dividing the capitalist world between two imperialist groupings would, in the first place, meet with the conflicting interests of the imperialist groups in exploiting the colonial or underdeveloped countries. The struggle between the Anglo-Belgian and the American imperialists in the Congo is a vivid example of this rivalry, which must break out into conflict in spite of all alliances and agreements, and all the more because of the narrowing field of imperialist exploitation.

But secondly, and even more important, there is the advancing liberation struggle of the peoples of the colonial and underdeveloped areas, which throughout Asia, Africa and Latin America is making it more and more difficult for any imperialist group to maintain its grip.

Therefore, the inevitable contradictions between the imperialist groupings themselves, and between the imperialists and the peoples of the colonial and underdeveloped countries, make Kennedy's plans of a united capitalist world unrealisable.

Increasing Exploitation

At the same time, every step taken by monopoly capitalism in this direction is aimed not only at survival but at increasing the exploitation of the working class and the robbery of the people generally, including the smaller capitalists. This is an aim which unites the monopoly capitalists in spite of their other differences.

Government opposition to wage increases is not a purely British policy: it has been the continuous demand of United States "advice" to countries taking loans from American-controlled sources. A recent report of the European Economic Community (Common Market) quoted in the November *National Institute Economic Review* calls attention to wage earnings in West Germany "rising much faster than productivity", which is the plea in Britain and France. In France the de Gaulle government has been resisting wage increases demanded by important sections of the workers. In Britain, as we know, the same policy is being operated.

The monopoly capitalists in each country are in fact preparing the way for the more bitter struggle for markets—inside or outside any "Common Market" area—by efforts to bring down real wages by one means or another.

Resistance to these attempts is not only vital in order to maintain living standards, but is also necessary to safeguard the future of the working class and the people of each country against the political effects of the "unified and co-ordinated" monopoly capitalist plans put forward by Kennedy.

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Ways of Improving the People's Welfare[1]

P. Oldak

POPULAR well-being, or the standard of living, is a category which expresses the extent to which people are provided with consumer goods, services and social benefits. The vital elements which determine this category are: standards of consumption of the staple foodstuffs and consumer manufactures, housing and work, labour conditions, facilities for rest and leisure, ability to acquire an education, health service facilities and social maintenance, provisions for free and all-round development of the individual. The standards of living of broad sections of the population of a country, its labouring classes, are dependent on the level of the productive forces of society and on the predominant form of production relations. At the same time, certain concrete features of the living standards of the peoples in different countries depend on geographical conditions, national composition of the population and its past history. Therefore, living standards can be examined from various angles. A purely economic analysis of the issue goes hand in hand with the study of the physiological needs, the ethnical and historical traditions and customs as well as with the formation of new cultural requirements. The objective of an economic analysis is the study of the standards of living and their dependence upon socio-economic factors, which actually determine the economic category of "welfare".

The problem of popular well-being has developed into the subject of an acute ideological struggle in recent years in view of the tremendous successes of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. and the People's Democracies, and the sharp rise in living standards in these countries. What are the laws governing the improvement in living standards under socialism and capitalism, what are its prospects, how will the Soviet Union solve, in the coming years, the task set by the Party—to achieve the highest standards of living in the world?

Unable to deny the rising material well-being of the Soviet Union, bourgeois economists try to explain it as a kind of common stage of present-day industrialism prevailing in all economically developed countries. In this way bourgeois economists and sociologists try to impress upon their readers that the growing well-being of the people in the socialist countries does not stem from the very nature of the new social system, but is the legitimate outcome of a definite stage of economic development. This of course, has nothing in common with the real state of affairs.

Social Production Relations

A really scientific analysis of the problem of popular well-being can only be obtained on the basis of Marxist theory, which calls for a profound study of the part played by the social factors, above all, by the influence of the predominant type of social production relations.

In the era of capitalism science and technology advanced by leaps and bounds in the space of several centuries: the transition was effected from manual labour to machine industry, which prepared the ground for a swift improvement in living standards of all sections of the population. However, the exploiting essence of the capitalist system, the capitalists' endless drive for profit, inevitably restricted the incomes of the working masses.

It was the socialist revolution that, by doing away with the exploiting classes and transferring the means of production into the hands of the working people, opened the prospects for the development of production in order to meet the people's requirements.

Under socialism a steady rise in living standards of the masses becomes an objective necessity, a vital law of social development. The law on the continued raising of the material and cultural welfare of the people stems from the very nature of socialist production relations. It is the very essence of production founded on social ownership of the means of production.

The fact that there are no exploiting classes in the Soviet Union, that there is no unemployment, that Soviet working people have every opportunity of acquiring an education and improving skills are factors which place Soviet working men and women in immeasurably better

[1] From *Voprosi Ekonomiki*, No. 9, 1961.

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conditions than their counterparts in the capitalist countries. Immense advantages are obtained from the development of public funds, which in our country are used for free medical aid, education and pensions, provided on a large scale. Thanks to the rapid growth of the public funds, consumption of Soviet workers is about 33 per cent above the level assured by wages.

Comparative Living Standards

However, in the case of a number of major items living standards in the Soviet Union are still below the level in the U.S.A. A good many American families are better supplied with staple foods, housing and a large variety of durable goods. That is the consequence, on the one hand, of the economic backwardness of tsarist Russia and the immense damage inflicted to the national economy of our country by war, especially the Second World War and, on the other, of the exclusively favourable conditions which prevailed for economic development in the U.S.A. This also is explained by the vast profits the United States derived as an imperialist power over the many years of exploiting the underdeveloped countries, a large part of which went to develop its own industry.

"The fact is well known," said N. S. Khrushchov in September 1960, "that the American people had achieved a good deal in the development of their country, but we do not envy them. We invite the United States to a peaceful competition in economic development and improving national well-being." Khrushchov made special note of the fact that

> "competition between socialism and capitalism is not defined merely by the quantity of the national product produced, not merely by the quantity of the product produced per head of population. It is determined also by achievements in moulding the human personality so that man, who creates all the values on earth, should rank first among these values, so that he should promote ever more the advance of science and technology, making life easier and better for all people on earth."

There is not the slightest doubt that our country, which has entered a new period in its development—the period of full-scale construction of communist society—will be able in a historically short time to attain a higher productivity of social labour as compared with capitalism, and on this basis assure the highest level of well-being of the people in the world.

The tempo of economic development is the decisive factor which resolves the final outcome of the competition between the two systems. The advantages which derive from this higher rate of development will enable the Soviet Union, in the coming ten years, to outpace the United States in both the overall volume of industrial output and output per head of population. This will set up the material requisites ensuring for our people the highest standard of living in the world.

Satisfaction of Needs

In order in concrete form to explain what is meant by the task of satisfying most fully the requirements of members of the socialist community and to determine its solution, it is essential, briefly, to deal with the question of what is implied by "satisfaction of needs" and what degree of satisfaction (or as is often said "satiation") of the various requirements society has actually achieved today. As is obvious, man's requirements and the degree of their actual satisfaction do not coincide. Requirements, taken as a whole, are always far in advance of the attained level of consumption. An analysis of statistical data shows that although man's needs, taken as a whole, tend to grow infinitely, the needs in certain products and services are restricted; they reach a final "point of satiation". The tendency towards the infinite growth of the "sum total" is due to the fact that requirements keep growing in quantity, that is to say, they continually grow in number; and also to the fact that there is a certain, even if slowing down increase in the demand for each item, and a rising qualitative demand for already apparent requirements (the demand for new models and the like).

Some idea of the problem of satiation can be obtained from an analysis of the relation between incomes and the demand for certain commodities. With the growth of income the gap narrows. If with rising incomes there is a definite decline in the demand for a product, and when with the level attained consumption does not in practice rise despite the increased incomes, it is to be assumed that at this point consumption fully meets requirements.

Theoretically there should be a satiation border line for all products, that is to say, a level of complete satisfaction of requirements.

The elaboration of rational consumption levels, based on scientific findings, is a big and complex problem. So far the problem has been confined to working out staple necessities (food, housing, clothing, furniture, household goods and electrical appliances) and some cultural items (clocks and watches, radio and TV sets and so on).[2]

It should be noted that we proceed from the

[2] See *Marxism Today*, April 1961, pp. 126-127.

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present scientific outlook on the quantity of these products necessary fully to meet human requirements as well as from our present concept of the quality of the goods required. However, the fact must not be overlooked that in the case of many articles norms cannot be established (for instance, in respect to fashion, colour, material, finish of footwear, clothing, and a large variety of other commodities). In this case the task is not to establish some kind of rational limits but, on the contrary, to produce products in as great a variety as possible, to prompt, develop and satisfy individual demands.

* * *

An important theoretical problem concerned with the development of popular consumption during the transition from socialism to communism is the question of the ratio between the rate of increase in labour productivity and the level of consumption. The fact is well known that the consumption level socialist society can ensure its members in any given period is determined by two factors: the size of the national income and the accumulation planned. The national income is the source which goes to form the accumulation and consumption funds. Therefore, within each year the absolute magnitude of each fund is inversely dependent upon that of the other. However, over a longer period the interdependence between consumption and accumulation is far more complicated. True, accumulation presupposes a certain deflection of part of the material values, constituting the physical volume of the national income, from current consumption. Nonetheless these means are used for expanding the productive and non-productive funds of the country: construction of mills and factories, canals, houses, laying out gardens, town planning, etc. All this promotes higher consumption in the near and more distant future. In carrying out accumulation society, as it were, puts off consumption for the present in order considerably to improve it in the future. Needless to say, people in the socialist countries cannot be interested in any short-lived rise in the consumption level by reducing accumulations, since that would lead to slower expanded reproduction and that would swiftly bring about a slowing down in the growth of consumption. Socialist accumulation should be sufficiently high to assure full use in production of technological progress. Only then will society achieve the highest possible rate of increase in productivity of labour, which will in turn create the conditions for the realisation of optimal rates in the rise of national consumption over a long period.

Backward Countries

In the case of the socialist revolution in a backward country the only way of radically improving living standards is industrialisation and the training of national technical personnel. Furthermore, the shorter the historical period during which the industrially developed countries have to be overtaken, the larger must be the proportion of the increased national income used for expansion of the accumulation fund. This finds expression in the much higher tempo of the growth of labour productivity as compared with the rate of growth of the consumption fund. However, with the increased economic and technical development of the country, socialist accumulations reach such dimensions that full use can be made of modern technological developments. Then it is possible for society to achieve rapid progress in labour productivity, and in ever greater measure to use it directly for raising national consumption. The tempo of the growth of the consumption fund increases, approaching that of the productivity of social labour. Although the gap in the rate of growth of these indices gradually diminishes, it is still economically a vital necessity for labour productivity to keep steadily ahead. That is an indisputable fact. This process can be clearly traced in socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. From 1913 to 1957 labour productivity per hour in Soviet industry increased 12.5 times and the real incomes of the workers 5.3 times, i.e. the rate of growth of labour productivity more than doubled the rate of growth of real incomes of factory workers.

With the progress achieved in industrialisation and the expansion of the physical volume of the national income the country was able to allocate an increasingly greater amount of accumulation for developing the branches of industry producing goods for consumption. This found its reflection in a more even rate of increase in the indices under consideration. The gap between the tempo in the increase in productivity of labour and real incomes of factory workers was greatest in the period of the first five-year plan. In the course of the second and third five-year plans this difference was already less marked. In between 1940 and 1959 labour productivity in industry (calculated per worker) increased 180 per cent and the real incomes of wage and salary earners 100 per cent. The target figures for the seven-year plan envisage a still greater approximation in the rate of growth of these indices.

Since economic development in the People's Democracies took place in a different historical situation than in the U.S.S.R., the development of these countries, already in the initial period,

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could proceed with the tempo of labour productivity increase keeping only slightly ahead of the rate of growth of the consumption fund. In Poland, in the period from 1949 to 1955 labour productivity in industry increased 75 per cent and the consumption fund 60 per cent.

Relying on a powerful industry and making extensive use of the achievements in present-day science and technology, socialist society will in the course of its development be able to allocate increasingly greater means to satisfy the ever-growing material and cultural requirements of the population.

Greater capital investments in agriculture and light industry will make it possible to speed up the development of the branches of industry producing articles of consumption, and bring it closer to the rate achieved by the branches producing means of production.

This will make it possible for socialist society to ensure the expansion of the consumption fund and real incomes in a tempo which will be only slightly below the rate of growth of productivity of social labour.

* * *

One of the major problems of the growth of national consumption in the period of full-scale construction of communist society is the question of the prospects for developing the two basic parts of the consumption fund: the individual consumption fund and the public consumption fund. In the foregoing years the public consumption funds were marching ahead. Thus, while real incomes of wage and salary earners per worker in 1959 doubled, as compared with 1940, and the real incomes of the peasants rose 2.2 times, the public funds per working man increased four-fold. When work started on the first five-year plan the public consumption fund accounted for only 24 per cent of the individual wage fund, and in 1958 it was already 41.5 per cent.

Public Consumption Fund

The solution of a series of vital social tasks made it imperative for the public consumption fund to grow at a faster pace than the part of the consumption fund used for remuneration of labour. The interests of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. required that the Soviet people should in a historically short time develop a national heavy industry, ensure the defence potential of the country and its economic independence, and along with this, with all possible speed, do away with the centuries-old illiteracy, develop the medical services, provide for the disabled, build up a network of children's institutions, sharply increase the number of schools, specialised secondary schools, higher educational establishments and research institutes.

The first and major tasks of meeting the social and cultural requirements of the population have been tackled successfully. In respect of public education, the health services and social maintenance our country has by far surpassed the foremost capitalist countries. Today there is free education, free medical treatment and free accommodation at children's institutions—all at the expense of the public consumption funds. These funds enable people in the socialist countries to live in comfortable homes and pay little rent, attend clubs, reading halls, palaces of culture and many sports establishments free of charge, get accommodation, free or at a discount, at rest-homes, sanatoriums, tourist bases and the like.

Free distribution of part of the consumption fund is one of the elements of communist relations which already matures under socialism. Hence, their growth is a matter of vast social significance.

It should be borne in mind, however, that free distribution in the conditions of today is not, in the full sense, communist distribution according to needs. At the present stage of its development socialist society cannot as yet bear fully the expenditure for the upbringing of the younger generation, the provision of medical aid and the upkeep of the aged. In order fully to meet the respective requirements the free services have to be developed to a greater extent, there must be a better developed network of children's institutions (nurseries, kindergartens, boarding schools), public health establishments and so on. At present a part of the expenditure for the upkeep of the children in the kindergartens and nurseries (roughly 20 per cent) is borne by the parents. People have to pay for medicines they get at the chemists' shops, although that does not amount to much. People pay part of the accommodation costs in rest homes and sanatoriums. All this, without belittling the immense social gains of our peoples in the spheres of public education, pre-school upbringing, protection of health and social maintenance, shows that we still have much to do before going over to the communist principle of distribution.

It stands to reason that socialist society must go on ensuring a steady increase in the public consumption funds and give special attention to broadening the network of children's institutions and the system of medical services. These spheres will be the first where needs will be fully met free of charge. The growth of the public funds and the development of increasingly better conditions for the all-round development of the younger

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generation, for preserving public health and ensuring maintenance in old age are things which demonstrate the tremendous historic advantages of the socialist system. It is a most eloquent manifestation of the humanistic principles of communism.

Labour Productivity

Nonetheless the Party proceeds from the Leninist principle that the building of communism must be based on material incentive. Distribution according to work done will in the coming twenty years remain the basic means for satisfying the material and cultural requirements of the people.

A speedier development of the productive forces of socialist society decisively depends on how far the system of labour organisation and remuneration stimulates higher labour productivity, reduction of costs, and rational use of the basic and circulating capital at the disposal of industry. In order most fully to utilise the immense reserves available we must first of all heighten considerably the material incentive of the workers of the socialist enterprises, their interest in the better results of their labour. The latter is indivisible from the growth of the monetary incomes of the working people, and consequently from that part of the consumption fund of socialist society which is distributed in accordance with the quantity and quality of their work.

At present the level of development of the productive forces in our country is still inadequate to assure a considerable priority growth of the public consumption funds and at the same time to provide for a sufficiently swift rise in the monetary incomes of the working people. The principle of material incentive is now the decisive factor, being a vital element for raising the productivity of social labour and gaining time in the economic competition of the two systems.

Personal and Public Funds

This trend in the development of the two basic parts of the consumption fund at present and in the immediate future found its reflection in the seven-year plan. The target figures envisage an increase of real incomes for wage and salary earners in the seven-year period, calculated per worker, by an average of 40 per cent, and the real incomes of collective farmers by not less than 40 per cent. The public consumption fund, calculated per worker, is to grow by about 41 per cent. The absolute increase in the public fund is to be 67 per cent during the seven-year period, and in the consumption fund 60-63 per cent.

At a later stage, when monetary incomes become higher and the principle of material incentive is used in full measure, socialist society will be able to increase rapidly the share of the public consumption fund. Then, at a higher stage of our development, the priority growth of the public consumption funds as a genuinely communist way of improving the people's welfare will be an immediate basis for the transition to communist distribution according to needs and to communist forms of consumption.

The cultural level of the population rises and the variety of industrial goods and services increases with the development of the productive forces, and this finds its expression in the speedy expansion of material and cultural requirements. Although the growth of requirements is connected with the development of production it nevertheless always marches ahead of the producing facilities of society.

Needs and Abundance

Under socialism production aims at broadening popular consumption, at meeting as fully as possible the growing material and cultural requirements of the members of society. That, however, does not at all imply that ultimately the process of developing production will "overtake requirements" and that with the transistion to communism (or at some given stage of the mature communist society) society will be able fully to assure *all* the needs of man. The latter by no means refutes the fact that under communism the principle of distribution according to needs will be effected, it merely requires its proper scientific presentation. It would be wrong to think that under communism *all* goods required by man will be produced in such abundance that people will want nothing else, and therefore there will be no need further to develop production. Such a conception obviously contradicts the laws of historical materialism, the laws of dialectics. Nor is it right to assume, as some people think, that under communism production will achieve such a degree of development that all the newly arising requirements will be satisfied at such speed that actually society will be able without hindrance to effect the principle of distribution according to needs in respect to *all* material and cultural benefits.

Communist society will achieve abundance in the production at first of a certain group of major products and services which will steadily expand. But at the same time there will arise ever new requirements which undoubtedly will not be fully met at once. It follows that an abundance of all products which man requires and their distribution

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according to needs is the limit to which communist society will continuously strive for and approach. However, the very approach to this limit will be accompanied by the further growth of public and personal needs, which will make it imperative further to develop social production. Therein lies the internal contradiction and the motive power of the development of the communist system which is the basis for the infinite process of the development of production, and consequently also for infinite progress of communist society as a whole.

The immediate phase of achieving a communist level of national welfare, and our immediate aim, is to establish abundance and fully to satisfy popular requirements for *basic* products and services. It should be specially emphasised that the creation of an abundance of products, even with a very high level of technological development, will require great human effort and expenditure of much natural wealth and material values which man has already created, and which cannot always be speedily restored. Therefore, the movement to abundance and distribution according to needs permits of no squandering of existing material and cultural values. In order fully to satisfy the swiftly growing needs of society it will be absolutely necessary to expend natural wealth with utmost care, to economise labour and to use consumer goods most rationally.

A Note on Scientific Thinking

John Lewis

I should like to add a footnote to my article in the December number in reply to a query raised by a reader.

It concerns the statement (page 377) that "No theory is acceptable which is so constructed as to be consistent with any facts whatever." It might seem that such a theory was absolutely watertight! Not so. For consider: the theory of evolution states that the more complex forms of life (e.g., the vertebrates) have evolved from more simple forms—the invertebrates. If so, then the older geological deposits will reveal invertebrate fossils, and only the more recent deposits vertebrate fossils. The theory is *only* compatible with these facts. It is not compatible with finding vertebrate remains in the sedimentary rocks of 500 million years ago. Since these rocks only contain the fossils of invertebrates, the theory is so far verified.

Or consider the discovery of the cause of yellow fever. The hypothesis was that it was conveyed by the bite of a mosquito which had previously bitten an infected person. This theory is *not* consistent with any facts whatever. It would not be consistent with men contracting yellow fever who had not been bitten, but had only been in contact with infected cases, or who had been bitten by mosquitoes which had not previously bitten men suffering from the disease. The facts supported the theory. Only the men bitten by infected mosquitoes contracted the disease.

Large theological explanations are usually guilty of this fallacy. Providence rules all things for our good. If we suffer it is for our good. If we do not suffer it is for our good. The theory cannot be contradicted whatever the facts. It is therefore nonsensical.

Primitive theories of magic are similar. If the bewitched man dies, that is because he was bewitched. If he does not die, that was because another magician had a stronger spell. It is *added* proof of the validity of the theory! Nothing that happens or does not happen invalidates the theory. Therefore it is not an acceptable hypothesis.

If I say: there is an invisible tiger in the room, he doesn't growl, he can't bite you, you can't touch him or smell him—no facts, such as the fact that I don't see him or that he doesn't bite, can invalidate the theory. Nothing can invalidate it. Therefore it is nonsensical.

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Discussion contribution on:

Stages of Social Development

David Craig

Several contributors to this discussion have fallen back on guesses as to the extent of slavery in ancient India, China, and elsewhere. But a fair amount of facts in this field have already been assembled, particularly in *Slavery in Ancient India* by Dev Raj Chanana (People's Publishing House, Bombay, 1960). This scholar finds that slavery was widespread in almost every region of India in ancient times, and this was probably typical of the East. The economy of Hindu and Buddhist temples in Cambodia was "dominated" by slave labour, and the Eastern temple, then as now, was a major landowner. Ceylonese monasteries spent large sums on maintaining slaves; in Chinese Turkestan Buddhist monks owned slaves and bought or exchanged them as need arose; in China the monastery slaves had the job of ploughing the hilly and virgin areas, and were sent out to help peasant tillers (pp. 14, 85-6).

Comrades Jardine (July *Marxism Today*) and Griffiths (December) doubt whether slave-labour ever "dominated" agricultural production anywhere. It depends what you mean by "dominated". But Dev Raj points out that in one of the big towns, Mohenjo-daro, of the Indus (Bronze Age) civilisation, rows of barracks, presumably living quarters for slaves, were found near the granaries and the platforms where rice was husked with pestle and mortar. This was a society ruled by a governor who lived in a citadel and controlled the granaries. The slaves were therefore key labour in the key industry of that economy. And that civilisation was very likely identical in social organisation with the civilisation of Mesopotamia (pp. 16-17).

"Gifts" of Slaves

Evidently it is impossible to assess the proportion of slaves to free workers in ancient India. But numbers recorded are often large: "gifts" of fifty or a hundred slaves extorted by the invaders (Assyrian or Aryan) who overran the Indus area in the later Bronze Age; 10,000 given by a king to a priest in the period between the Indus and Buddhist epochs; a harem including over 15,000 belonging to a prince of the Buddhist period; hundreds handed over as part of a royal dowry; 700 belonging to a governmental minister.

It is true that the slaves' work was often marginal to the economy. They might be wet-nurses, concubines, menial kitchen workers. In a middle-class household (that of an owner-cultivator or small merchant), they might carry food to the tillers in the fields or be hired out to other households when work at home was slack (pp. 47-51). But they also took part in productive work: guarding merchants' caravans (and looting the caravans of rivals), prospecting for gold, and of course tilling for the monasteries. At certain periods, slave labour was of key importance in reorganising the economy. After the creation of the Magadhan empire (which numbered Asoka among its rulers), the state had to raise money to pay for the new centralised administration, and it is probable that prisoner-of-war slaves were used to reclaim new land for the imperial farms. Again, in the Mauryan period (from the fourth century B.C.) when the empire in the Ganges valley reached its most developed form, great numbers of slaves were employed to raise money for the new complex state, working as prostitutes in the many state brothels and as labourers in the state workshops and farms and in the mines (pp. 53, 100-1).

The many forms of traffic in slaves described by Dev Raj show how slavery penetrated into every corner of society. In certain closed oligarchies, a slave's children were automatically slaves. Elsewhere slaves were bought, given in dowries and presents, inherited, taken over along with elephants, and used to pay gambling debts (pp. 34-46). Prisoners-of-war, i.e. defeated enemies who had formally surrendered, were usually enslaved. So widespread an economic set-up surely deserves to count as one of the criteria in the definition of a stage of social development. Indeed the basic causes of the growth of slavery are such that it was highly likely to arise in all civilisations. Slavery is the social product of the domestication of animals and the culture of cereals. Cereals, unlike meat and fruit, can be stored. Thus Dev Raj points out (taking evidence

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from the epics, the Ramayana and Mahabarata) that hunting communities had no slaves, whereas cereals afforded "the possibility of nourishing a growing population and a society living by such means of production can accept strangers, at least as slaves. On the other hand this very storage gives birth to inequality in the community with the possibility of debt-slavery and of slavery for nourishment, etc." (p. 29).

Social Relations

It is also clear that slavery involved quite different social as well as economic relations from other kinds of labour. Although owners were piously exhorted to treat slaves decently, e.g., by the Buddha, a man was not punished for mutilating or killing a slave any more than for damaging or destroying one of his tools. The slave-tiller was a sheer beast of burden with no rights whasoever; and there is one terrible story of a slave woman in Nepal despairing as one of her children after another was sold by the man who owned her (pp. 54, 147-8).

Dev Raj emphasises that ancient-Indian slavery differed from Graeco-Roman in that nowhere in the Indian economy were slaves the only or the overwhelming type of labour (p. 110). India was so large and (in the Ganges and Sindh valleys that were cradles of its civilisation) so fertile everywhere that the ruling class did not control all sources of food and therefore could not bring all the people under direct exploitation. Water was so plentiful that the masses could irrigate their crops without need for big irrigation schemes such as laid the basis for the grain surplus and hence the ruling-class in Egypt and Mesopotamia.[1] The political unification of so huge a country could never last for long, and during the frequent periods of conquest and anarchy the rights of property, including the ownership of slaves, disappeared. The semi-tropical forest was so widespread that runaway slaves could easily take refuge in it and live as food-collectors (hunters and fishermen) or as brigands (pp. 111-3).

Thus the physical conditions of civilisation differ so much that any broad type of economy, though genuinely typical, is bound to differ greatly in specific character from region to region. But we should not allow this to blunt the usefulness of the general tool that the theory of the successive types of society puts in our hands.

[1] V. Gordon Childe, *What Happened in History* (Pelican, 1954), 116-7, George Thomson, *The First Philosophers* (1955), 74-6; Childe, 92-6, Thomson, 79-82.

Slavery in Ancient India is typical of the new pioneering studies of Eastern culture by Eastern Marxists which must in future be one of the first sources for light on the history of the formerly colonial peoples. There is also Debiprasad Chattopadhyaya's *Lokayata* (P.P.H., Bombay), a study of the *charvaka* or ancient-Indian materialist philosophy—a work worthy to stand beside Childe's or Thomson's as an outstanding piece of Marxist thought that brings facts from every field of historical studies to the explanation of the given cultural theme. The appearance of these books from India is indeed a striking confirmation of Thomson's view that the spread of Marxism in India would throw up solutions of its hitherto insoluble historical problems.[2]

[2] *First Philosophers*, p. 7.

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